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Summer • 1952

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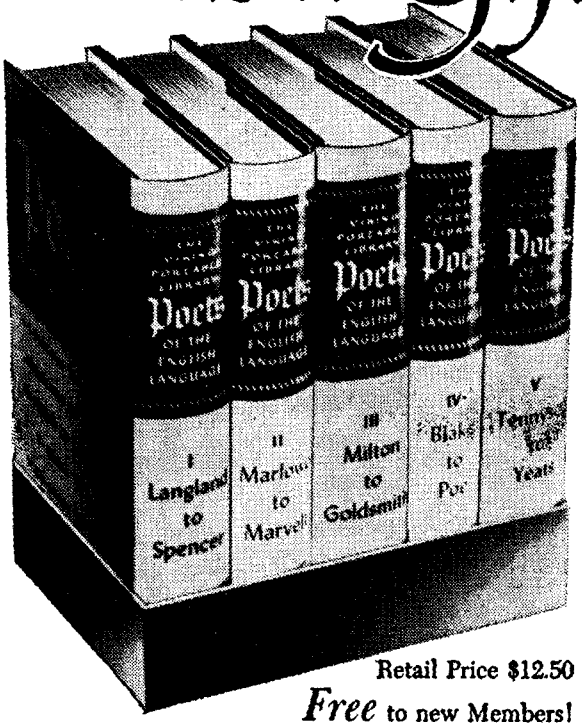

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American Culture and the State Department

H. F. PETERS

NIETZSCHE once complained about the immoderate use of the conjunction "and." He thought it was altogether improper to form combinations by the verbal magic of "and" that were not logically connected at all, but merely thrown together arbitrarily. The Germans, he said, are particularly prone to offend against good linguistic usage in this respect. Why, do they not insist on saying "Goethe and Schiller," or even—much worse—"Schiller and Goethe," when anyone with a rudimentary sense of aesthetic justice knows that there is no similarity, no connection between the two. Goethe was a poet, and Schiller . . . Well, Nietzsche called him the "Trumpeter of Saeckingen."

I am using this example by way of warning the reader that I am quite aware that the conjunction "and" in the title of this article must seem arbitrary. Furthermore, let me say right here that it is not my intention to make a case for a relationship which does not exist, but rather a case against it. The objection follows: Why make a case against something that does not exist? To meet it, I must now shift my ground somewhat and explain that, in the minds of some people, it does exist.

They feel that the State Department, in addition to its more prosaic tasks, must also carry on a cultural mission, must be concerned with the exchange of students and teachers, must run libraries, organize concerts, arrange lectures and put on exhibitions: in short, it must engage in the business of exporting American culture. They point out that all nations are in the culture-export business now. The British have their British Council; the French, the Alliance

✪ H. F. PETERS is a professor at Reed College, Portland, Oregon. In 1949, he founded the American Institute at the University of Munich, and became its first director. He returned to his position at Reed in the fall of 1951.

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Française; the Russians, their centers of Sovietskaya Kultura. Why, then, should we not have America Houses and United States Information Libraries abroad?

That is a very valid question, for there is no doubt that cultural arguments can be effectively used to influence people and to make friends. There is no doubt, either, that American culture is not well known abroad, that the most superficial, sometimes downright stupid, ideas on this subject are published in reputable journals, and that it is about time the world took notice of the very lusty youngster who has grown up here.

You might say, if the world does not take notice, so much the worse for the world. Unfortunately, we cannot assume a position of indifference in this matter because we are living in a competitive world, and cultural competition is very fierce today. In fact, our stature as the leading power in the West depends on whether or not we can convince people that we have more to offer than money, machines or bombs.

Let me put it differently: America's military and economic power is well known. Some people admire it; some fear it: all respect it. Our moral and spiritual qualities are not well known. As a result, many people assert that we do not have any and reject our claim to leadership. The Communists, of course, go much further. They say that we are the propagators of a money-mad civilization, atom bomb barbarians who have forfeited the right to use the word "culture." The whole weight of their anti-American propaganda centers on this theme, which appears in the most amazing variations. Even while you read these words, somewhere in the Communist world American culture is being attacked and vilified. To give the devil his due, we must admit that some of these attacks are planned with great skill. For example, it was a stroke of genius when, during a Bach concert conducted by Shostakovich and broadcast over the leading transmitters of eastern Germany, the announcer said, "This is our answer to the American 'Kulturbarbaren': Bach or boogie-woogie—take your choice."

Anyone who has been up against this sort of thing knows how important it is that our cultural efforts receive the attention they deserve. Thus the question is not whether we should or should not

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export American culture, but solely what is the most effective way of doing it.

Culture, like religion, is easily damaged by what might be called institutionalization. I know this is a horrible word, but it expresses what I mean. In the case of religion, the churches are in charge of its propagation. In fact, the term "propaganda" was first used by the Catholic church with reference to the "College of the Propaganda," established in 1622 for the purpose of supervising Catholic missions abroad. There are differences of opinion about the effectiveness of this method of propagating religion, but no one, to my knowledge, has suggested any other. In Russia, where religion is considered "an opiate for the people," its institutionalized form was abolished until it became evident that you can destroy the church, but you cannot destroy religion. This is simply another way of saying that the church is useful to religion, but religion can exist without the church.

A similar point can be made concerning the relationship between culture and the state. Many states subsidize cultural activities, support orchestras, theaters, operas, art museums, libraries, and a great variety of similar non-profit enterprises. This can either be helpful or harmful, but it cannot make a culture or destroy it. German culture certainly did not profit from the aid the Nazis gave it. It survived in spite of the Nazis.

Americans are, on the whole, suspicious of too close a connection between cultural activities and the state. They feel, and rightly so, that when the state pays the piper, it also calls the tune. They also feel that there is an innate contradiction between the bureaucratic temperament and the artistic temperament; the former tends to be cautious and conservative, the latter impulsive and unorthodox. Since, in a state-supported culture, bureaucrats are necessarily in control of things, clashes between them and the artists are inevitable. In such a situation, the artists do not have much of a chance. They may be clearly in the right—although in cultural matters, questions of right and wrong are rarely clear—but their employers do not like their work and out it goes. To be sure, private sponsors are equally capricious and can make life miserable for artists. My only point is that where the state is the exclusive patron of the muses their votaries

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do not have an easy time. Witness those poor wretches who are under orders to compose "ideological" music.

This brings me back to the State Department's role in the propagation of American culture. Perhaps I should say first that the word "culture" does not fit all, or even many, of the activities carried on in the Department's educational program. Much of it is straight news or direct political propaganda. The Voice of America, for instance, is primarily a political, not a cultural voice. As such, it is undoubtedly effective. The Russians at least seem to think so, for they are trying to jam it out of existence. Their position is: No capitalist heresy must reach the ears of the faithful. This should be sufficient reason for us to do everything in our power to strengthen the Voice, even if it means spending more money on it. Currently, the Voice is costing $25,000,000. David Sarnoff, chairman of RCA, thinks we should spend as much as $500,000,000 on it and should set up a separate agency. The State Department, he says, is already burdened by too many responsibilities and cannot do the job properly. Quite a few senators feel the same way. Perhaps we cannot carry on effective political warfare without a separate organization, and quite possibly the State Department is no more equipped to project America politically than culturally, but this is not a problem I am concerned with here. I am concerned with those activities that aim at a direct cultural impact: that is to say, with the exchange of students and teachers, the distribution of American books, the presentation of American music, paintings, plays, and so forth.

How fruitful such a cultural exchange can be has often been demonstrated. The rebirth of learning in Europe at the end of the Middle Ages was greatly stimulated by such Greek scholars as Manuel Chrysoloras, George of Trapezunt, John Argyropulos, Demetrios Chalcondylas, and many others who settled in Italy when Constantinople fell to the Turks. Italian artists and scholars, in turn, carried the torch of knowledge into France, England and Germany. It was this constant process of cultural cross-fertilization, this exchange of Christian, Greek and Hebrew ideas which fashioned what is called the spirit of the West. Although it was largely uncontrolled —the result of wars, revolutions, persecutions and so forth—many religious and temporary rulers encouraged it. Alphonse of Aragon,

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King of Naples, invited Greek scholars to his court. The Medicis supported a very effective exchange program in Florence, and so did the authorities of Venice, Rome, Padua and Bologna. The old centers of learning—Paris, Oxford, Prague and Heidelberg—exchanged their professors regularly, and it used to be a standard practice among European students to change universities.

The idea of cultural exchange, then, is not new; what is new, as far as America is concerned, is the official awareness of the need for it. Largely influenced by political considerations, above all by the desire to counteract the violent anti-American propaganda carried on by the Communists, Congress in 1948 passed the Information and Educational Exchange Act, setting up the State Department's Office of International Information, its Office of Educational Exchange, and the United States Information Service abroad. Previous to this, the Fulbright Act and the Smith-Mundt Act had authorized the Secretary of State to use credits in foreign currencies which are not convertible into dollars to finance Americans studying abroad and to help to bring foreign students to the United States.

Under these various programs, thousands of American students and teachers have gone abroad, and similarly, thousands of foreign students, teachers, labor leaders, businessmen, journalists, politicians (in fact, representatives from almost all trades and professions) have come to this country for study tours of longer or shorter duration. It is too early to judge the total impact of the exchange program, but certain conclusions can be drawn. For example, it is quite understandable that people who have come to America under United States government grants are on the whole enthusiastic about the scheme. Most people like to travel, and a free trip to America is a generous present. In evaluating their response, we must make allowances for a natural sense of gratitude, but must not assume that, because our visitors are grateful to us, their knowledge of the moral and spiritual foundations of our society has increased. But this is precisely what needs to be effected.

America's social conditions are well known abroad. Even people behind the Iron Curtain know that our standard of living is higher than anywhere else, that we have more automobiles, radios, washing machines, bathtubs, and gimmicks of all sorts than any other

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country. They also know that we have political parties, hold elections, make speeches, go to the movies, and read newspapers. To be sure, Communist propagandists try to distort this picture by playing up the seamy side of American life: slums, tenements, sharecropping, racketeering, lynching, etc. Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath* has long been a favorite with them. They also like Erskine Caldwell's books and try to convince their peoples that the depraved, subhuman creatures whom he depicts are average Americans. But we need not lose any sleep over this aspect of Communist propaganda. Very few people are taken in by it. And if we take foreign visitors through America because we think we must impress them with the outward manifestations of our society—and what more can we do in brief study tours?—we are barking up the wrong tree. I am not denying that most of them will enjoy their visits, will have a good time—such a good time, in fact, that some will be reluctant to go back home—but they won't get down to the grass roots of American life. They will see what we have. They won't see who we are. Some of them may even go back more convinced than before that our way of life lacks moral and spiritual content, that we are entirely preoccupied with trivia—with "coke machines, launderettes, laxatives and baseball," as one Oxonian put it.

I don't think it is necessary to labor the point. The fact is that the State Department's exchange program may do many things: it may impress people with our wealth and generosity, with the size and variety of our country, with the intricacies of our political and social life; it may give them ideas about technical improvements, labor-saving devices, methods to increase production. All of this is useful, but not designed to help lay the myth of America's cultural sterility. It may, in fact, strengthen it.

Admittedly, this myth cannot be exorcised overnight. It requires patient handling by people who are familiar both with American culture and the prejudices it has to overcome, who know how to distinguish between essential and ephemeral aspects of American life, and who are not hamstrung by political considerations.

A few personal experiences may illustrate this point. I have been connected with the American Institute at the University of Munich, one of the few centers of higher learning dedicated exclusively to

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the study of American life and letters. The idea of establishing such a center at one of the leading European universities occurred to me as I reflected on the almost complete ignorance of most educated Europeans concerning America's contribution to literature, history, government, art and philosophy. Since hardly any European university offers more than occasional courses in American subjects, this ignorance is not surprising. On the other hand, it is precisely the educated elite in Europe who uphold the anti-American myth and are largely responsible for its perpetuation. I reasoned that the best method of attacking the myth was to challenge Europe's intellectuals by presenting a program in American studies comparable in excellence to the best offered in any other field.

Such a program was developed and, with the aid of the Rockefeller Foundation, a group of very distinguished American professors invited to Munich. The State Department was, of course, kept informed of these plans. Most officials in the Education and Cultural Relations Division were sympathetic and cooperative; so were the Germans, both at the University and the Ministry of Education. Student interest in the proposed program likewise was encouraging. Everything pointed to a successful session. But suddenly, Washington had misgivings about the political views of some of our American professors. Senator McCarthy's charges of disloyalty and subversion had intimidated most officials in the State Department. Their morale was at a low ebb, and I found that, while I continued to press for the professional excellence of the Munich program, they were more and more concerned about its political repercussions at home. I thought in terms of culture, they in terms of politics. In the ensuing struggle, the Institute program had to be curtailed. Our students asked questions about academic freedom in America. It was all most unfortunate.

I was at first outraged by the political mentality of people presumably concerned with education. Since my return to this country, I understand their dilemma better. As officials in a government agency that was under severe congressional and public criticism, they simply could not afford to countenance controversial people or activities. Since most cultural activities are controversial, they are condemned to ineffectiveness.

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This was brought home even more forcibly on another occasion. I had arranged for an exhibition of contemporary American paintings in Munich. It was to include works from all leading American artists. There was no idea of preference for any particular school. We were not interested in extremes, but wanted to show a cross section of American art. Most Europeans know very little of what is being done in America in this field. I was sure that a good exhibition would go a long way toward counteracting some of their prejudices. Since I did not want to take the responsibility of assembling such an exhibition myself, I got in touch with the director of an American art museum, a man respected for his conservative views. He at once started work on drawing up a list of painters and paintings that should be included. He also proposed that the exhibition should be shown in America first, before being sent abroad. We would thus escape the charge of assembling something for export only, and give our own people a chance to see what we were going to show others. When I finally got the list, I found it contained twenty names with five pictures from each painter. I forwarded it for approval to the official in charge of exhibitions in Frankfurt. He was enthusiastic about the list, said that most German art connoisseurs of his acquaintance were equally enthusiastic, and promised official help to get the pictures to Munich. Imagine our surprise when, a few days later, we received a cable from Washington saying that "only six names on the list are acceptable to the State Department." No reasons were given. The exhibition was not held.

I could go on with this. I could explain in detail how difficult it is to carry on an educational program that depends on annual congressional appropriations. In the first place, Congress, as a political body, naturally applies political criteria when it passes on cultural projects submitted by the State Department. Thus, Southern senators do not favor presentations of American Negro art; many Republicans would probably object to programs featuring TVA. During the budget debate last August, Senator Dirksen protested against a Lincoln broadcast, because it mentioned a letter of congratulation addressed to Lincoln by Karl Marx. And Senator McCarran was outraged by what he called "scurrilous statements" about him in a publication sent to the United States Information Libraries abroad.

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In the second place, by the time the State Department's educational budget is approved, which may be anywhere between June and August, it is, of course, far too late to get good people for the program. Academic appointments are, as a rule, made early in the spring. The idea that someone in Washington can pick up a telephone late in August, call Professor X long distance, and ask him to take on a September overseas teaching assignment—for which funds have just become available—is fantastic. Professors do not work that way, nor do college or university administrators. But the officials in charge of the Department's educational program have to operate under such handicaps. Since everyone connected with it must be screened for his political views before he can be accepted, further delays, often of many months, are caused. Thus it has happened that an educational expert requested for a particular assignment one year turned up the next, when nobody expected him.

Finally, there is a tacit understanding that no one who, for whatever reason, might embarrass the Department, must be employed. When the poet T. S. Eliot came to Munich to receive an honorary degree from the University—more than 2,000 students and professors crowded the Auditorium Maximum to hear him speak—I was informed that Eliot was persona non grata in Washington because he had served on the board of a selection committee that had awarded a poetry prize to Ezra Pound. I hold no brief for Eliot, and I agree with the critic R. P. Blackmur that "Mr. Pound is neither a great poet nor a great thinker," but it would be foolish to deny that both Eliot and Pound have had great influence on American poetry, and that Eliot's work, in particular, constitutes an important element in contemporary culture.

One must conclude that, insofar as our educational program tries to project permanent American values rather than surface phenomena, it is doomed to failure because we have put the political cart before the cultural horse; we are trying to solve a long-range problem by means of short-range projects; and we tend to mistake quantity for quality.

This is true of our official efforts; we have been more successful privately. The Salzburg Seminar in American studies, which was started by a group of Harvard students several years ago and is

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carried on with private and foundation support, is perhaps the most effective center for the dissemination of American ideas in Europe today. The American Institute at Munich has weathered the storm, and is doing good work for a deeper understanding of this country. The universities of Upsala and Oslo are active in this field, and students at Frankfurt and Cologne will have a chance to take courses in American subjects.

So far so good. This points the way, but it is only a beginning. We must do much more if we want to do justice to the complexities of American life and letters. And we have to do it largely at the university level because public opinion, in most countries, is made by university people. I am convinced that no government agency can do it. I am also convinced that uncoordinated private efforts are insufficient. What is needed is a private organization, privately supported and directed by independent citizens who can carry on their work without political fear or favor. As a start, such an organization might undertake to sponsor a research project long overdue: a study of the American share in the development of Western civilization. Strangely enough, no such study has been made. We have explored remote and primitive cultures; we have pondered the impact of foreign ideas on American thought: we have neglected to evaluate our own part in the process of intercultural penetrations. In the absence of such a study, it is difficult to combat the widely held view that America is merely the recipient of European culture, and has made no significant contributions of her own. This view, of course, feeds the myth of our cultural impotence.

The present situation is characterized by profound uncertainties: military, political, economic, but above all, spiritual. As far as the non-Communist world is concerned, the greatest question mark is America's spiritual strength. It seems to me that nothing more important can be done at this time than to help uncover, by example and precept, the permanent values upon which our society rests.

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Let Mr. Chips Fall Where He May

JOHN S. DIEKHOFF

IT IS A COMMONPLACE of pedagogy that teachers should teach students, not subjects. It does not follow from this half-truth that students study teachers, not subjects. Yet this, too, is a frequent assumption. Donald J. Cowling, former president of Carleton College, and Carter Davidson, president of Union College, observe—without italics—in *Colleges for Freedom* (New York: Harper, 1947), that "The opportunity that a college gives to each of its students to come into *individual relations with unusually significant personalities* and to have the benefit of their instruction and inspiration is the most precious gift these institutions have to offer."

"Unusually significant personalities" are unusual. "Every college probably has at least one outstanding teacher, the persistent topic of conversation among undergraduates and the alumni, beloved of many, and a continuing influence in their lives long after graduation. Those colleges with two or more are indeed fortunate." From these observations it follows that "in selecting new members of the faculty, the college president or dean or committee should be concerned primarily as to whether the candidate gives promise of developing into such a center of influence."

This is a conventional view, and it is the despair of teachers. The statement implies that college teachers should be great personalities and that they should establish "individual relations" with each student. But it says explicitly that only one or two in each faculty may hope to become what they ought to be. The rest of us are mistakes made by the personnel officer or appointments committee. But if only two in a faculty of one hundred are persistent topics of conver-

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sation, the ninety-eight hewers of wood and drawers of water who complete the staff are also useful in their humble ways. And their professional skills and more modest personal qualities are also important. Every prima donna needs a supporting cast.

The notion that a teacher must be great or nothing, and the notion that the effectiveness of teaching varies directly with the personality quotient of the instructor, spring from a misconception of the relationship between teacher and student. These notions are based on the assumption that good teaching always depends on an intimate personal relationship between teacher and student. This assumption seems to be based, in turn, on another one: that the teacher is what the student studies—almost as though the teacher's function were to rear the youth of the nation in his own image.

The common view that the tutorial method is, in almost all circumstances, the ideal teaching method follows from these concepts and illustrates them. If the teacher-student relationship must be intimate and personal, and if the teacher is the object of study, the ideal teaching situation will, of course, seem to be that of a wise father with a dutiful son. The conversation of a wise and learned tutor with a single student is the academic approximation of this situation. Its peculiar value lies in the intimacy of the personal relationship between teacher and student, tutor and pupil.

As the personal relationship is weakened, teaching is presumed to become less effective. Accordingly, in our colleges we often claim to approximate the ideal tutor-pupil relationship by pretending to keep our classes as small as possible. The ratio of faculty to students (which is thought to reflect the size of classes) is a standard measure of the quality of a college.

Intramurally, we use a different standard, for the reputation of a particular instructor is often based on the number of students who "elect" his courses: the more the better. An instructor who can build an elective course from ten students to a hundred students is regarded as a successful teacher, in spite of his apparent willingness to sacrifice his "personal" relationship with his students. At least one college which claims to stress the "discussion" method of instruction, which boasts of its high ratio of teachers to students, and which sets

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up parallel sections of each of its required courses in order to keep classes small, allows students to attend any sections they please, if they please. The effectiveness of an instructor is inevitably judged by college administrators in part by counting the students he attracts. Students make the judgment that it is better to be in a class of one hundred six conducted by Professor Ampersand than in a class of six conducted by Professor Asterisk, not because the class is large, but because Professor Ampersand is knowing and skillful.

Sometimes they will be right. Perhaps more often than not they will be right. Aristotle was remarkable (and remarkably successful) as tutor to Alexander; but it was not as tutor to Alexander that he won his reputation as a teacher, and there have been less successful tutors: George III of England was also educated by tutors. Good teachers from Abelard to George Lyman Kittredge have been remarkable for the large number of students attracted to their classes. Students will travel from the corners of the world to study with a Sievers or an Osler; they do not insist on monopolizing the man with whom they study. Great teachers are great teachers because they are wise, learned and skillful men of good will—not because they have few students, and not because they have an intimate acquaintance with each student.

When it is insisted that the instructor must know each of his students "as an individual," the object is often something called "individualized instruction." Presumably, this means that the instructor will teach differently for students of different backgrounds, interests or capacities. To teach well, he must know which student is the daughter of a laundryman, which the son of a lawyer, and which are the twin children of a pharmacist. Presumably, he must know their family incomes, what their hobbies are, what they have read or not read, what effect television has had on their study habits, whether or not they go to church, and to what church, what their vocational objectives are, whether they have brothers and sisters, and what their personal tastes are. He must know what tensions exist between sibling and sibling, parent and child.

Let us suppose a class of twenty students. Let us suppose an instructor who has so invaded the privacy of his students that he

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knows such things about each of them. Let us suppose further that he "knows" his students as one knows one's friends: a much subtler apprehension of personality or character, and one which does not depend upon the accumulation of personal (or personnel) data. Indeed, let us suppose that he is a friend to each student, and that being a friend means not only that he is well-intended toward each of them, but also that he has achieved some such apprehension of their personalities. Having established this relationship, when the instructor faces his heterogeneous class of unique human beings, what particularly does he do that he would not have done anyway? Does he give twenty different assignments? Set twenty different examinations? Choose or write twenty different textbooks? Must the teacher be a psychiatrist, giving each assignment as part of his therapy? If so, he must disband his class and conduct twenty different tutorials, replacing the furnishings of the classroom with the analyst's couch.

We need not pursue this further. When we ask what the instructor does differently when he comes to know his students, it becomes apparent that there is little that he can do differently. It is not necessary to his teaching that he "know" each student well "as an individual." He needs to know young men and women, not Henry and Susie; it is to their common humanity that he makes his appeal, not to their personal idiosyncrasies. More particularly, he needs to know the relevance to men and women in the modern world of the subject or skill that he teaches. For his object is not to acquaint his students with his own philosophy or his own eccentricities, or even with himself. His object is to assist them in the mastery of specific skills or the acquisition of specific knowledge. The obtrusion of his own personality may hinder rather than help. A wise teacher once observed that he was less distressed by what his students forgot than by what they remembered. And another wise teacher, George Herbert Palmer, insisted that "the teacher must keep himself entirely out of the way, fixing young attention on the proffered knowledge and not on anything so small as the one who brings it."

Two distinguished teachers, I. A. Richards and Gilbert Highet, have recently expressed this view, so old-fashioned that it is new

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again and needs iteration. In a lecture on "The Teaching Process," Mr. Richards spoke as follows:

My topic is the relation of the teacher to the pupil—or shall I say student?—the person addressed, the audience, the recipient. And I've only one solid piece of advice to give on that, which is: "Don't have a relation. Don't have one; don't."

In the same lecture, Mr. Richards says:

. . . I have known superb teachers who to the end of their days couldn't tell one student from another, orally, optically, or even intellectually. That is very disturbing, but I think such teachers are speaking to the "all in each of all men," to use a phrase of Coleridge's. I have often suspected that Coleridge himself was talking most of his life to this "all in each." And there have not been many more influential teachers.[1]

Gilbert Highet makes the same point in his recent book, *The Art of Teaching:*

The teacher, then, must know the young as such. Next, he must know the names and faces of his pupils . . . . But the teacher will find that, beyond that, it is seldom feasible to treat all his pupils as individuals. Even if it were possible, it would be unwise. For it would mean that the problem presented by each young man or girl would have to be approached as though it were unique. This would make it very difficult to solve, would be exhausting for the teacher, and would waste the profits of experience. The art of teaching, like the art of healing, consists partly in recognizing, within each individual, a particular type or combination of types.[2]

Even when the relationship of the teacher to his student is relatively impersonal, as Mr. Richards and Mr. Highet recommend, the relationship of a student to his teacher may be very personal. The more personal it is, the greater the impression made by the teacher upon the mind and character of the student—for good or ill. We may only hope that the teacher measures up to his responsibility. During an informal meeting of a small seminar at one American college, a famous novelist and playwright, doubling as professor of

[1] Reprinted by permission of the publishers from *A Handbook for College Teachers*, edited by Bernice Brown Cronkhite, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950.

[2] Reprinted by permission of the publishers from *The Art of Teaching*, by Gilbert Highet, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1950.

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English, spilled beer on a student's best dress. The dress was retired from service, instead of going to be cleaned, because the stain was more precious than the dress. The anecdote illustrates how very personal the relationship of student to teacher may be. But it is a one-way relationship; if the student had spilled beer on the novelist, his response would have been different. And if he also left an unexpunged mark on the student's mind, it was not merely because he got close enough to spill on it. Moreover, the student's emotional involvement probably interfered with her learning. Her attitude toward literature would be a better measure of the instructor's success than her attitude toward the instructor.

We agree, of course, that the student's attitude toward the instructor is important, but the desirable attitude does not necessarily depend on the intimacy of a tête-à-tête, or even on the intimacy of small classes. The relationship of the bobby soxer to Frank Sinatra is a personal relationship—although Sinatra, again like the professor, need not reciprocate the emotion of each bobby soxer. Neither does he need to know each "as an individual" to exercise the peculiar influence which is the mark of his success.

The kinship of teacher and entertainer is real. Teacher and orator are still closer kin. The success of the orator depends on the establishment of a somewhat personal one-way relationship between the members of the audience and himself. So does the success of the teacher. If the student is to do more than absorb, like a blotter, the factual information spilled on him, he must take an active part in the enterprise in which he is jointly engaged with his instructor. Unless the student regards the instructor at least with respect, the enterprise is difficult for them to manage jointly. If something like affection is added to respect, communication becomes easier and more meaningful. This is a principle recognized in ancient rhetoric. Aristotle (as translated by Lane Cooper) points out that:

> . . . the speaker must not merely see to it that his speech . . . shall be convincing and persuasive, but he must . . . give the right impression of himself, and get his judge . . . into the right state of mind . . . for in conducing to persuasion it is highly important that the speaker should evince a certain character, and that the judges should conceive him to be disposed towards them in a certain way, and further, if

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possible, that the judges themselves should have a certain attitude towards him . . . . The same thing does not appear the same to men when they are friendly and when they hate, nor when they are angry and when they are in gentle mood . . . .

Aristotle goes on to identify the three qualities in a speaker which will ensure him the confidence of his audience:

As for speakers themselves, the sources of our trust in them are three, for apart from arguments there are three things that gain our belief, namely, intelligence, character and good will.

The teacher's proper task of persuasion differs from the orator's, of course, and his techniques differ accordingly. He wishes to persuade the student to study or practice, to foster in the student an attitude toward the knowledge or skill which he seeks to master. The greater part of his task, however, is not to persuade at all. It is to expedite learning. Despite this difference, the qualities Aristotle lists are as important to the teacher as to the orator.

An orator, according to Quintilian, is a good man skilled in speech. A poet, according to Milton, is a good man skilled in poetry. These definitions assume that speaker and poet have something to say worth saying—their virtue includes knowledge. Making the same assumption, we may define the teacher as a good man possessed of knowledge and skilled in pedagogy. Unless the teacher has qualities which will command the respect of the student—intelligence, character and good will—the relationship which will best enable the student to learn from him is not likely to be established. Perhaps great teachers, under whose guidance students learn best, are great men skilled in pedagogy—men of great wisdom, great learning, great skill and great good will. Of course such men are rare.

Fortunately, men of intelligence, character and good will, unqualified by the adjective *great*, are less rare; and fortunately, we may use something less than the best. Most of our college teaching—and so far as we can tell, much of it is acceptable—is done by men and women not very remarkable for their wisdom. Students may respect something less than superlative wisdom, may feel affection for something less than a great personality, and may learn from something less than profound scholarship.

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We shall guide their learning better still if we convince ourselves that the teacher is not what the student studies, and that we have overestimated the importance of intimacy in the personal relationship between teacher and student. For we shall then be able to recognize that in a college, however important the individual faculty member may be, teaching is a cooperative enterprise; and we may organize our colleges so as to encourage cooperation instead of pretending that there is no room for cooperative effort in teaching. If the entire education of a student were entrusted to a single tutor, and if the teacher were the proper object of the student's study, we should insist on greatness in our teachers. These are not the facts. In a college, the student studies a curriculum, not a man, and not a group of men. No single faculty member is responsible for the entire education of any single student. On the contrary, one hundred faculty members with different gifts and accomplishments may be jointly responsible for the education of fifteen hundred students. One of the reasons for the existence of a school is that it can educate many students at a time—more students than its staff members could educate working separately. Another reason is that a school can do it for less.

The final and conclusive reason is that a school can do it better. We need not argue the point. There are many colleges to which a conscientious parent may entrust the advanced schooling of his children with some confidence, but there are not many individuals to whom a conscientious parent could confidently entrust the entire advanced education of his children. There are not enough to go around, and only those with the resources and prestige of Philip of Macedon could secure such tutors for their children. If we put proper value on the hewers of academic wood, upon teachers who are competent if not great, and if we organize our colleges to exploit the competence they possess, we may keep our confidence in our colleges. When ideas, rather than faculty personalities, become the persistent topics of student conversation, students, teachers, and education in general will be greatly benefited.

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Our National Mania for Correctness

DONALD J. LLOYD

EVERY NOW AND THEN the editors of the university presses let out a disgruntled bleat about the miserable writing done by scholars, even those who are expert in literary fields; and from time to time there are letters and editorials in our national reviews bewailing some current academic malpractice with the English language. At present, even *PMLA* (the Publications of the Modern Language Association), traditionally the repository of some of the worst writing done by researchers, is trying to herd its authors toward more lucid exposition. And at two recent meetings of the august Mediaeval Academy, one at Boston and one at Dumbarton Oaks, bitter remarks were passed about the failure of specialists in the Middle Ages to present their findings in some form palatable to the general reader, so that he can at least understand what they are writing about.

Even admitting that a really compelling style is the result of years of cultivation, much scholarly writing is certainly worse than it needs to be. But it is not alone in this. Generally speaking, the writing of literate Americans whose primary business is not writing but something else is pretty bad. It is muddy, backward, convoluted and self-strangled; it is only too obviously the product of a task approached unwillingly and accomplished without satisfaction or zeal. Except for the professionals among us, we Americans are hell on the English language. I am not in touch with the general run of British writing by non-professionals, but I suspect that it is nothing to make those islanders smug, either.

Furthermore, almost any college professor, turning the spotlight with some relief from himself and his colleagues to his students, will

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agree that their writing stinks to high heaven, too. It is a rare student who can write what he has to write with simplicity, lucidity and euphony, those qualities singled out by Somerset Maugham; far more graduating seniors are candidates for a remedial clinic than can pass a writing test with honors. And freshman writing is forever the nightmare of the teachers of composition, as it would be of their colleagues if the latter could not escape to the simple inanities of their objective tests.

Yet it was not always so. I have on my desk a little manuscript from the fourteenth century written by an unknown author, which I am in the process of editing. When I read it to one of my classes, as I occasionally do, with no more modernization than my own Great Lakes pronunciation and the substitution of a word for one which has become obsolete, it is a simple, clear and engaging document. "Where is any man nowadays that asketh how I shall love God and my fellow-Christians?" it begins. "How I shall flee sin and serve God truly as a true Christian man should? What man is there that will learn the true law of God, which he biddeth every Christian man to keep upon pain of damnation in hell without end? . . . Unnethe [scarcely] is there any lewd man or lewd woman that can rightly well say his Pater Noster, his Ave Maria, and his Creed, and sound the words out readily as they should. But when they play Christmas games about the fire, therein will they not fail. Those must be said out without stumbling for dread of smiting. But if a lewd man should be smited now for each failing that he maketh in saying of his Pater Noster, his Ave Maria, and his Creed, I trowe he should be smited at the full." And so on, to the beautiful poetic line, "Then think it not heavy to dwell with thy mother in her wide house, thou that laist in the strait chamber of her womb." The spelling in the original is hectic, and the capitalization and punctuation sporadic, to say the least.

Yet there was a man who knew what he had to say and set out about saying it, with no nonsense and no fumbling. He aimed for his audience and, judging by the dog-ears and sweat-marks on the book, which is about the size of one of our pocket books, he hit it. Why cannot we do as well in our time? Indeed, the eighteenth cen-

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tury was about the last age in which almost any man, if he was literate at all, could set down his thoughts—such as they were—so that they did not have to be excavated by the reader. We have an abundance of letters, diaries, pamphlets, and other papers from that period, and they are well written. It was the age, we may recall, not only of Boswell and Johnson, but of Pepys and Franklin as well, and of a host of other men whose main legacy to us was a simple, direct, workmanlike style, sufficient to the man and to the occasion, which said what it had to say and said it well. With the end of that century we go into the foggy, foggy darkness, and God knows whether we shall ever find our way out of it—as a people, that is, as a nation of thinking men and women with something to say.

Nevertheless, there is no question what makes our writing bad, or what we shall have to do to better it. We shall simply have to isolate and root out a monomania which now possesses us, which impedes all language study and inhibits all mastery of our native tongue—all mastery, that is, on paper; for as speakers of English, we Americans are loving and effective cultivators of our expression. I recall the gas station attendant who was filling my car. The gasoline foamed to the top of the tank, and he shut off the pump. "Whew!" I said, "that nearly went over." "When you see whitecaps," he replied, "you better stop." "You better had," I said, lost in admiration. But if you had given him a pencil, he would have chewed the end off before he got one word on paper.

The demon which possesses us is our mania for correctness. It dominates our minds from the first grade to the graduate school; it is the first and often the only thing we think of when we think of our language. Our spelling must be "correct"—even if the words are ill-chosen; our "usage" must be "correct"—even though any possible substitute expression, however crude, would be perfectly clear; our punctuation must be "correct"—even though practices surge and change with the passing of years, and differ from book to book, periodical to periodical. Correct! That's what we've got to be, and the idea that we've got to be correct rests like a soggy blanket on our brains and our hands whenever we try to write.

This mania for correctness is another legacy from the eighteenth

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century, but it did not get a real grip on us until well into the nineteenth. Its power over us today is appalling. Among my other tasks, I teach advanced courses in the English language to students preparing to teach. Most of these are seniors and graduate students, and in the summer especially, there is a sprinkling of older men and women, experienced teachers, who are sweating out a master's degree. They have had courses in "English" throughout their schooling. But of the nature and structure of the English language, the nature of language habits, the relation of speech to writing, and the differences in usage which arise from dialect and from differing occupational and educational demands—of all these, they know nothing at all. Nor do they come to me expecting to learn about these. They want to know two things: what correct usage is and how you beat it into the kids' heads. That there are other considerations important to an English teacher is news to many of them. What they get from me is a good long look at their language.

To trace this monolithic concentration on usage is to pursue a vicious circle, with the linguists on the outside. The literate public seems to get it from the English teachers, and the teachers get it from the public. The attitudes and pronouncements on language of a Jacques Barzun, a Wilson Follett, a Bernard De Voto, or a Norman Lewis ("How Correct Must Correct English Be?") mean more to English teachers than anything said by the most distinguished professional students of language—such as Leonard Bloomfield, Robert Hall or Charles Carpenter Fries. Correct usage is pursued and discussed, furthermore, without much reference to the actual writing of literary men. Now and again I amuse myself by blue-penciling a current magazine such as the *Saturday Review* or *Collier's* against the rules. I have to report that error is rampant, if variation is to be considered error. The boys just don't seem to pay attention to the rules. Moreover, having seen some of their first drafts, I am pretty sure that what conformity they do display is the work of their wives, secretaries, editors, proofreaders and typesetters, rather than their own. It takes a determined effort to beat the old Adam out of a readable manuscript.

Thus it is only the determined, consciously creative professional

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who can build his work on the actual language of men. In a recent issue of the *Saturday Review*, I stumbled on a quotation from Wolfgang Langewiesche. "Well, it isn't crowned by no castle, that's for sure," he wrote, "and by no cathedral either." My eyes popped, and I read it again. I liked it. It looked right; it sounded right; it had a fine Chaucerian swing to it. But I bet it cost him some blood and a fifth of Scotch to get it into print. In my own limited publication, I find "a historical" changed to "an historical," all my "further's" changed to "farther" and all my "farther's" to "further," "than us" watered down to "than we," and many, many more. How E. M. Forster got by with "the author he thinks," and got it reprinted in a freshman handbook a few pages along from the prohibition of such locutions baffles me. A phony standarization of usage appears in print, the work of editors unconscious of the ultimate meaning of what they do.

The result of all this is that a wet hand of fear rests on the heart of every nonprofessional writer who merely has a lot of important knowledge to communicate. He writes every sentence with a self-conscious horror of doing something wrong. It is always a comfort to him if he can fit himself into some system, such as that of a business or governmental office which provides him with a model. It is thus that gobbledegook comes into being. I once braced a distinguished sociologist, a student of occupational myths and attitudes, about the convoluted, mainly nominal turgidity of his writing. He apparently admitted verbs into his sentences the way we admit DP's into the United States, reluctantly and with pain. In speech he was racy, confident and compelling, a brilliant lecturer. "It's the only way I can get my work into the periodicals," he told me blandly. "If it's clear and simple, they don't think it's scholarly." With what relief the pedagogues subside into pedagese!

If we really want to get good writing from people who know things, so that we can come to learn what they know as easily as we learn from their talk, we can do it in a generation or so. In school and out, in print and out, we can leave usage to its natural nurse, the unforced imitation of the practices which are actually current among educated people. We can use our English courses in school

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and college, not to give drill on questionable choices among common alternatives, demanding that one be taken as right and the others as wrong, but to give practice in reading and writing. We can learn to read and write for the idea, and go for the idea without regard for anything else. Then our young people will come to maturity confidently using their pencils to find out what they think and get it down on paper; then our scholars will come to write simply, clearly and brilliantly what they brilliantly know.

In our speech we have arrived, I think, at a decency of discourse which is conducive to effective expression. We listen, with a grave courteous attention, to massive patterns of speaking different from our own because they come from differences in dialect and social status; we listen without carping and without a mean contempt. Furthermore, we participate; we go with a speaker through halts and starts, over abysses of construction, filling in the lacunae without hesitation; we discount inadvertencies and disregard wrong words, and we arrive in genial good will with the speaker at his meaning. In this atmosphere, our speech has thrived, and the ordinary American is in conversation a confident, competent expressive being. In writing he is something else again.

No one flourishes in an atmosphere of repression. It is possible, of course, for a person with special aptitudes and a special drive to bull his way past the prohibitions and achieve an individual style. But with the negative attitude that attends all our writing, those whose main interest lies elsewhere are inhibited by fear of "error" and the nagging it stirs up from setting pen to paper, until the sight of a blank white page gives them the shakes. It is no wonder that their expression is halting and ineffective. They cannot fulfill the demands of a prissy propriety and trace the form of an idea at the same time. They thus arrive at adulthood victims of the steely eye of Mr. Sherwin Cody, whose bearded face stares at them from the countless ads for his correspondence school, demanding, "Do YOU make these mistakes in English?" The locutions he lists are not mistakes, and Mr. Cody knows they are not; but his readers do not know it, and they do not know that they don't matter anyway.

For usage doesn't matter. What matters is that we get done what

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we have to do, and get said what we have to say. Sufficient conformity is imposed upon us by the patterns of our language and by the general practices of its users so that we do not have to run the idea of conformity into the ground by carping about trivial erratics in expression. Why in this matter of language alone complete conformity should be considered a virtue—except to typists, printers and typesetters—it is difficult to see (unless, perhaps, we are using it as a covert and pusillanimous means of establishing our own superiority). In our other concerns in life, we prize individuality; why in this one matter we should depart from a principle that otherwise serves us well is a puzzle for fools and wise men to ponder, especially since there is no general agreement on what to conform to, and one man's correctness is another's error. Not until we come to our senses—teachers, editors, writers and readers together—and stop riding each other's backs, will the casual, brisk, colorful, amused, ironic and entertaining talk of Americans find its way into print. We should all be happy to see it there.

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Symphony: First Movement

JOHN HALL WHEELOCK

Faintly at first, and low,
The horns sing lamentation; answering cries
From flute and oboe weave obscure replies;
Through the forest of the spirit
Old fretful winds and murmurs breathe and blow;
Secrets we all inherit,
Sorrows, deep at the core of Being grounded,
Well up again, and flow;
The truce that bound it
Is torn away, Time's wound is bared anew.
Hear, O my spirit!
The violins begin their proud complaint
In the desert of the world.

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Life and the World It Lives In

PAUL B. SEARS

SINCE THE SCIENTIST is our source of information in the present instance, a few memoranda concerning him seem in order. To begin with, he is a scientist because he wants to be and, like the rest of us, rests heavily on intuition and aesthetic impulse. Scientific activity is basically what our ecclesiastical friends might call an "act of faith," for the scientist is moved by a profound belief that the universe of our experience is a consistent universe. Without that conviction, I doubt if he would have either the courage or inclination to persist in the intricate and exacting labors which are the price of verified knowledge. Do not be deceived by his skepticism—it is the safeguard of his basic confidence.

His code requires him to test and verify continually, with the aid of his five senses, those phenomena which interest him. But he must continually seek to probe beyond their limits, by means of induction, deductions and inferences that seem most reasonable in the light of what he already knows. Ceaselessly and fruitfully he tests the ideas thus formed; in the course of time, unnoted planets appear where calculation shows they should be, and the invisible atom is put to work.

But he cannot always advance from the safe ground of previously organized knowledge. He must, at times, attack exceedingly complex problems, knowing in advance that many of their details must await later solution, and being content meanwhile to verify their larger aspects. It happens, for example, that the chemistry of carbon, whose

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compounds are so prevalent in living organisms as to give rise to the name "organic" chemistry, could not for generations be made intelligible in terms of the relatively simpler inorganic chemistry. Students still complain that the subject reminds them of a project in learning the dictionary. But the chemists did not wait until all the necessary ground had been cleared in fundamental theory. They went ahead making tremendous progress and developing an extremely useful branch of knowledge long before they were able to explain it in detail.

What is true of organic chemistry is infinitely more true of the study of living organisms, plants and animals. We simply have to get on with the subject the best we can, knowing that it will be a long time, if ever, before we can resolve in detail many of the phenomena with which we must deal. After all, we have good precedent in the higher mathematics, in which we are accustomed to designating complex entities by symbols, treating them as wholes and establishing important relationships concerning them, without stopping first to analyze and resolve each complex entity into all of its factors.

Such, in essence, is certainly the method we have to follow in the subject known as ecology, which deals with the relations between life and environment. It is with these relations we deal when we concern ourselves with the conservation of natural resources, and with planning for the present and future welfare of mankind. My own business for years has been the study of the ecology of plants and animals, and I have found that you cannot pursue it very far without discovering that man is involved, too. He is inseparably a part of the living landscape and subject to the great laws which govern it.

And I have discovered, as have others before me, that there is little hope of intelligent and permanent order for mankind until people realize that they are inescapably subject to the great scientific laws which govern the universe. We accept these laws readily enough in machine design, industrial chemistry and the electrical arts. But we often—perhaps generally—act as though they did not apply to the landscape of which we are a part.

Few problems in modern education seem to me more important

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than this: to develop in the mind of the student, not merely a casual glimpse, but an integrated picture of the universe of physical reality. What this could mean as a background to great decisions! How few statesmen possess it! Jan Smuts, Thomas Jefferson, Chaim Weizmann, to a degree Theodore Roosevelt can be named—beyond that meager list, the search falters.

Because the intelligent application of knowledge depends upon the values that people cherish and toward which they work, it seems in order to glance backward briefly. Among the many factors which have made modern science possible, it is important to recognize the great creative contribution of the Jewish people. In the midst of very difficult conditions of belief and practice, they postulated the idea of a single Deity who ruled through universal law and who respected His own laws. Without this belief and the confidence which it inspires, I do not see how the foundations of modern science could have been laid.

Science also owes an inestimable debt to the Greek belief in the right of free inquiry, to the Roman instinct for order and clear communication, and to the restless curiosity of such irrepressible individuals as Galileo. But it has continued to owe much to that hunger, manifest in every great religious system, for some semblance of certainty about the cosmos. I know of no faith which has not its basis in some kind of conception of the universe.

Until about a century ago, the idea of Special Creation was prevalent. This is the idea that all species of plants and animals were created in the beginning as they are today. We think of it now only as religious dogma. Dogma it certainly was, but we must not forget that it was also the simplest, most plausible explanation possible in view of the evidence then at hand. It was Darwin's great merit, not that he originated the idea of organic evolution, for he did not, but that for the first time he made it a reasonable scientific hypothesis.

Special Creation had been subjected to increasing strains as soon as men began to travel widely and explore all the continents. Further strain came from the finding of fossil remains of extinct animals, and the explanation of geological change by familiar processes. But the final *coup de grâce* came as a result of the travels and explorations

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of the young British naturalist whom I have just named. After he had examined the natural history of South America and its islands, the old idea was no longer adequate to explain what he had seen.

He found that the farther apart animals of the same group lived, the less they resembled their closest relatives. For example, in the islands off the coast, there are not many kinds of birds, but there are the finches. Some of these finches are seed-eaters, as are those we know. Others have become insect-eaters. One type has developed a short, powerful chisel bill like the woodpecker. This finch will climb the bark of a dead tree and peck away until it unearths an insect. Then, lacking the useful tongue of the woodpecker, it will take a thorn and employ it as we would a nutpick to get the hidden morsel out so it can be eaten.

Evidently, while all of these island finches were closely related, they had been separated from their kin on the mainland so long that they had become thus differentiated. These and many other instances Darwin observed and thought about for years, but the answer eluded him until one day he chanced on the work of a British clergyman: "An Essay on Population," by Malthus.

Malthus knew that all kinds of life, including our own, have a tremendous capacity for increase, whereas food supply is finite. He knew that, in fact, populations never increase in theoretical fashion over any very long period of time. This had certainly been true of Europe since the Norman Conquest. Such disasters as the Black Death and the Thirty Years' War had clearly operated to keep the population down. Reflecting on the situation, Malthus decided that, while population always tends to increase beyond the limits of subsistence, the Three Horsemen—War, Pestilence and Famine—tend to hold it within those limits.

In this principle, Darwin immediately saw a clue to his great riddle. Granting that a high proportion of organisms are being eliminated in each generation, might there not be some principle that determined which survived and which did not? Darwin had long since observed that no two plants or animals are precisely alike, and that the tendency to variation is universal. From this he reasoned that some variations are better fitted to the environment than others, and so tend to survive, while those less fitted are lost. The out-

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come of this train of thought was his theory of Natural Selection.

The statement of this theory was a terrific jolt to traditional thought, but that is a story in itself. Our interest is in the fact that, for the first time, a wholly reasonable alternative to the Doctrine of Special Creation was offered, and that environment now came into the picture as an inescapable element in the process of life.

Meanwhile, however, other interesting things had been happening. That merry but intelligent monarch, Charles II, had been "mightily amused" (actually, I suspect, irritated) that the scientists of his Royal Society at Gresham College were wasting their time "doing nothing but the weighing of air." Yet within a century, their efforts had paved the way to the discovery of oxygen and the eventual demonstration that plants and animals are dependent upon materials and energy from earth, air, water and sun. Not only that, but it was further proved that these constant interchanges are very precise and orderly, and the very basis of material existence.

In other words, it was shown that the individual cannot survive apart from the material world. Every breath represents an interchange with it, and every transformation is as much to be accounted for as the transactions in a bank. It is impossible, except as a matter of temporary convenience, to think of any living body in any sense apart from the world around it. When, added to this, Darwin had shown how essential the environment had been in the long pageant of past life, it became forever clear that we and our fellow creatures are inseparably a part of the universe in which we live.

To me it is not a depressing thought, but rather a magnificent one, that the materials of our bodies are merely ours on loan. We have no permanent right to them. They have been used by countless generations of plants and animals before us, and countless generations will have need of them after we are gone.

What is true of the precise transformations of material is likewise true of the flow of energy, with the sobering difference that energy from the sun ultimately seems to become unavailable, being finally dissipated as heat after its course of use is run. In a universe without vegetation, this dissipation happens rather promptly. But where green plants are present, they are able to store it for themselves and other organisms. It is the profit and loss account of this storage and

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use transaction which determines the net worth of our adventure here on earth in material terms. And it is very much to our interest to see that storage is as efficient as it can be, and use as economical as possible. Success will depend, to some degree, upon our industrial pattern, but even more largely upon our skill and care in utilizing the land.

Incidentally, our understanding of the energy budget owes much of its beginning to the work of a brilliant young Yankee, Harvard graduate and loyalist named Benjamin Thompson. He later became Count Rumford and had, I suspect, much to do with the later municipal and industrial efficiency of Germany. It was while he was supervising the machining of cannons in a royal European arsenal that he studied the relation of heat and work, supplying information which was later utilized by physical scientists in establishing the principle of the conservation of energy. This, with the principle of conservation of matter, is really basic to that art of wise husbandry which we call Conservation with a big "C."

To get at the problem from a different perspective, that of time and process, a simple illustration will help. Let us take a book, say *American Men of Science,* in an edition of two thousand pages. If each page is given the value of a million years, the volume may represent the approximate age of the earth, around two billion years. In the first half of the book, there would be little record, though probably some, of living things. Most of their story comes in the second thousand pages. Taking the oldest assignable age of man as the skeletal remains and associated charcoal of Peking Man, their record would not exceed the last page, while recorded history would be a fraction of the last line of that last page.

Viewing the human adventure in terms of this immense perspective should be a rather sobering experience. Instead of regarding the world as casually thrown together for our own convenience, we should realize the tremendous momentum of the organization which has preceded us, and which so largely must condition our activities unless we wish to join the long procession of extinct forms. In particular, we should understand the imperative pattern which life has developed in relation to the transformation of materials and the flow of energy.

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The carbon compounds made by green plants, used by them and by animals, require energy in the making. That energy is stored in them and, with the materials which they contain, can be used to sustain life as the compounds are broken down. The breakdown may be complete, releasing all of the energy at once. This happens when wood burns, or sugar is oxidized to give energy to a growing plant. More often, however, the breakdown is a gradual, step by step process. This is what happens when sugar ferments to form alcohol. There is much energy left in the alcohol, as there is some in the vinegar which is a further step in the breakdown of alcohol.

A similar phenomenon occurs in autumn when the leaves change color and fall to the ground, there to undergo slow decomposition to their original raw materials of earth and atmosphere. As in the forest floor, so in the prairie, the field, the sea, or the manure pile, we observe the familiar proteins, fats and carbohydrates slowly releasing their energy as they break down.

At each step in this slow release, there is an opportunity, technically a *niche*, for particular forms of life to sustain themselves, as pigs do from the garbage of a farm kitchen, or flies from the droppings of animals, or molds from rotting fruit. One wave of life follows another as the process continues, until it is complete.

In the long course of time, this means that the rich variety of organic life establishes a close interdependence. And as time goes on, it seems likely that unless an organism in its niche establishes some fairly useful function (technically a *role*) in its relation to the whole system of which it is a part, it is likely to be eliminated. No doubt it was some adumbration of this fact which lay at the base of the old, egocentric idea that everything on earth was put here for our good.

At any rate, it is nonsense to speak of a solitary plant or animal. The web of life is seamless. The tigers space themselves "one to a hill," as the Indians say, each in terms of the territory claimed by his neighbors, and so do the wide-spaced cacti of the desert, whose shallow roots determine the zones of competition. Even the sweet songs of birds in the spring are less the outpourings of hearts bursting with love than warnings to fellow robins and larks to keep their proper distance.

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What is true within the species is certainly true between species. The termite eats wood, but cannot digest it without the microscopic organisms which live in the body of the termite. Hatch termite eggs under sterile conditions, and the young will starve in a bath of sawdust. The corn which keeps millions from starvation is equally dependent upon us, and it has been stated that the last maize plant would not survive the last farmer more than a few years. Truly the web of life is seamless, and we are a part of it.

Thus has the world community of living things shaken down into a grand working order through the ages. But more than this, we can see the innumerable smaller communities which compose it, each in turn moving in the same direction, toward relatively greater order and efficiency, until circumstances set a limit to the process.

We are familiar with the characteristics of the human pioneer—tough, hardy, self-reliant. We are less familiar with the fact that his toughness is a perishable quality, not always well adapted to success in a highly organized and civilized community for which he is the indispensable precursor. He is likely to sense this himself, and get nervous when too many neighbors move in, too close for his comfort. And the very traits which made him a success in his proper role of pioneer are likely to be serious liabilities at a later stage in community life.

The analogy holds in nature. The pioneer plants and animals which first move in and occupy vacant ground do so very efficiently. But they cannot continue to hold it against all comers. They cannot endure the shade which they create, nor can their young come up beneath it. I suggest that you sometime examine a birch or pine wood, for both represent a pioneer stage, and look for young birches or pines. You are not likely to find them. Instead, you will see spruces, or maples, or beech trees taking over. And you would eventually, if you lived long enough, see that space occupied and dominated by plants and animals all sensitively interrelated and capable of maintaining themselves indefinitely, unless struck by some such cataclysm as fire, climatic change or man.

In terms of energy, what happens is that the community develops toward what our friends in physical chemistry would call a steady state. This is a condition in which a system maintains itself

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while using the flow of energy through it in reasonably efficient manner to accomplish work. The phenomenon is not mentioned here as a mere biological curiosity. Rather, it is the prototype and example of the kind of process which we must use as our model as we develop our relationships among our own kind, and between ourselves and the world of nature of which we are inescapably a part. As we succeed in doing this, we build toward permanence. As we violate this great principle, we go down into physical failure and cultural disintegration. History affords sufficient evidence on this score.

But it is better to emphasize the positive side. History and contemporary life afford us encouraging instances of human communities that have made peace with their environments, maintaining themselves in stable and efficient order. The ancient and beautiful terraces of the Igorots between Manila and Baguio exemplify this, and so in our own country does the landscape occupied by the thrifty Amish and Mennonites in Pennsylvania.

Increasing numbers of individuals, with the aid of modern science and capital, are following this pattern on land which they control. This is the secret of grass-farming, exemplified on the holding of a New York financier near the Delaware Water Gap, and more picturesquely on Malabar Farm, where the irrepressible Louis Bromfield holds forth. Bromfield is a farmer, and a good one. I have watched his farm from its beginning, and you can believe what he writes about it. As he says, he has taken nature for his model, developing stabilized communities of plants which are in equilibrium with the animals and the human occupants. He uses legumes to convert the nitrogen of the air into proteins, and feeds minerals to his animals by way of the soil and vegetation.

Such are the possibilities, and such is the necessity, if our civilization is not to follow those disastrous examples of the past which have long since worn out their welcome on the fertile earth.

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Night Song

KATHERINE GARRISON CHAPIN

This is no night to sleep, the dark
Enters the casement; lemon and rose
In warm scents prick the heart.
Beneath, the quick stream flows
Against the wall in a delicate foam and goes
Under the sculptured leaves.

O bird at the window singing
Sing on the whole night through!
In liquid falling and ringing
This was the music they knew
Who lie so deep that never a dust is strewn
Under the sculptured leaves.

Here on the narrow couch
Pressed by the hands of the years
I lie, and the song in my mouth
Is silenced. Not with fears
The rolling Cyclops thunder, the Naiad tears,
Drowning the leaves;

But the dark knowledge of time
Slipping, a river, by,
Stripping the perfect rhyme,
Rose fading and fruit turned dry,
And these stones that sheltered an ecstasy
Empty, over the leaves.

And I cry for life, cruel and bright,
Imperfect and incomplete,
A thin horn winding at night
A summons against defeat;
As the nightingale sings where the cold streams meet
Under the sculptured leaves.

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The Leadership of Woodrow Wilson

EDWARD RYERSON

IN A DEMOCRACY, it is continuously necessary to understand the relationship between the personality of a leader and the public policy of his leadership. I believe we may understand at least one example of this important relationship through the case of Woodrow Wilson and the League of Nations, though we will by no means settle the controversy about the failure of the League of Nations, or even the failure of its acceptance in America. Aspects other than the personality of Wilson—the role of Lodge, for example, or the "sentiment" of a postwar world, or the "objective" shortcomings and mistakes of the treaty itself—these and other elements of the failure to create a peaceful world are of tremendous importance. Also of importance, in a democracy, is a clear understanding of the role of a leader in shaping policy, of his influence, and of the response of the citizens to the leadership that is offered them. From 1917 to 1919, the American people were offered a special kind of compelling leadership in international affairs, and they and their leader reacted to each other in ways that to me appear destructive, and in ways that may help us to understand something of the structure of destructive leadership during a period of crisis.

The personality of a leader must be measured by his public behavior. As citizens and as laymen we base our judgments on the public, not the private, man. There may be no distinction, or very little, between the two. We are, in fact, not competent to judge. Yet when we react to a man's public personality, we react to more than his speeches or his photographs. We also react to the evidences of fear or confidence, hostility or warmth—all the sensed elements that can make a public personality as subtle and as total as the personality known to wife or children. And we have the obligation to make our own interpretations. Joe Tumulty and others who were

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close to Wilson have frequently denied that Wilson was "really" cold or heartless or withdrawn, and have cited his relationships to family and intimate friends as evidence. This is very likely true, but the testimony on the other—the public—side remains; and if the private interpretation is accurate, the public man becomes more tragic: he made his confident self a prisoner of his public self, and the American people reacted both to the man who appeared before them and to the implications of the stifling of the other, and private, man.

As I analyze his public character, five traits appear and work upon one another, composing the public man his people knew.

The Presbyterian Necessity

Wilson had a persistent drive to convert others through a missionary activity. His Presbyterian background is well known, but even that background—his father, his wife's father, his maternal grandfather, and two of his great-grandfathers were Presbyterian preachers—does not explain the intensity of the drive he felt for himself. He was not persuasive about an issue until he could insist on a choice between good and evil, and until he could stand, like a preacher or a prophet, upon a platform before the people and speak to them in terms of morality. What took him out of the classroom was partly the need for a larger congregation: from the Princeton alumni, to the young reform politicians of New Jersey, to the voters of New Jersey, to the people of the United States, to the people of Europe. His greatest public achievement was his speechmaking: he could stand before the people and express his emotion in terms of morality and public policy, and he called from the audience a corresponding emotional response. Again and again, we get the sense of the audience made captive, not by the enthusiasm of a Teddy Roosevelt or the camaraderie of a Franklin Roosevelt or the paternal protection of a Lincoln (and all of these men created both moral and emotional responses of different types), but by compelling intensity, exorcising from the mind all contrary feelings. He had that extraordinary power of making public and effective the idealistic words of the academic study and the prophetic dream, and of speak-

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ing them as he must have felt them. It was as though the necessity of public utterance called into existence his private emotion. And the public he spoke to responded, but it was a response which could not be sustained, so great were the demands made on it.

The Isolated Man

Wilson's isolation, like his Presbyterian impulse, can be partially accounted for by his background. The Southern country-town life which he lived until he went to Princeton in 1875, the ministerial seclusion and tradition, helped to cut him off from his neighbors. He appears to have had a well protected boyhood. But his isolation went deep into his personality and was fed by his drive to convert. The prophet is an isolated man. But Wilson was an executive—and had to be—as well as a prophet. He had to act. The American people have not often experienced this combination. The roles of executive and prophet became confused, and, in their confusion, dangerous. As a missionary, he required of himself that he give to the people his message. The demands were on *him:* continually to give the truth, to give the message, to give the moral opportunity—but not to receive. And so his isolation was not balanced by human contact, as was Lincoln's when he inspected the troops, pardoned the convicted Union soldiers, and received their emotion in return for that which he gave them.

Unlike Lincoln, Wilson was in no sense a folk hero. The tragedy of his last Armistice Day—the small brass band and collection of Washingtonians Tumulty gathered to pay tribute to the sick ex-President in his house on S Street—lies in his isolation. The little crowd shuffled before the house, heard the sick old man speak uncertainly about the war he had led, and shuffled away, led by a Washington character who always took the part of Uncle Sam in the Washington parades.

Response to Attack

Like a true missionary, Wilson broke through his isolated conviction of the truth when challenged by heresy. The more infidels there were to convert, the more profound his religious conviction

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became, the more determined his idealism, and the more severe the demands upon his congregation of American citizens. When attacked, Wilson counterattacked. His political philosophy grew through attack and the necessity of answering attack. A political conservative in 1909, he met the challenge of the New Jersey Democratic machine and answered it; he met the challenge of the New Jersey progressives and answered them; he met the attack of Teddy Roosevelt and went further and in a more precise direction than had either Roosevelt or Bryan; he met the challenge of American patriots and pro-Allies enthusiasts with the Fourteen Points; he met the challenge of the national powers with a league for peace. Each challenge had to be met, but each challenge took its toll because he was forced to answer at the deepest and highest levels possible, and because each answer, in the isolation of his spirit, came from within himself. He was forced to draw upon his own spiritual strength for the answer.

Demands on Self and Others

Four times, as a Princeton professor, Wilson was elected by the Senior class as its most popular lecturer. In every position he held, he had the potential support of devoted followers. Harvey, Record, Tumulty, Brandeis and House served him faithfully until he had used up their services. The demands which Wilson made on his followers constituted a more complex, but less significant, problem than the demands he made on himself. There is a difference between the *use* of human material (Wilson himself said of his followers that he "picked their brains out"), and the *exchange* of human material. In this sense, Wilson was both demanding and isolated, or demanding because he was so isolated. The moral intensity that came from within him used him up, and he sought to replenish himself through the use of his followers. He does not appear to have given much in return. He sought a larger audience, not only because he was always trying to meet the increasing challenge of heresy, but also because a larger audience—or class, or congregation, or electorate—would give him, with his tremendous persuasive ability, larger support, would feed his need to be replenished by feel-

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ing the burning brightness of the inspiration of the conversion he had brought about. He could fully respond to his own ideals only if attacked by others, and because of his counterattack, he could demand a following. He consumed the devotion he aroused; but he also consumed himself, and at a faster rate than he could be replenished.

The Destructive Impulse

He consumed himself and the men who worked beside him. During his life he seemed continually to destroy, at the crucial moment, the very thing he had worked so hard to create: the graduate school at Princeton, the second-year program as governor of New Jersey, the League of Nations. He was a master of political management in the initiation of a campaign—most clearly seen in his handling of the New Jersey political situation in 1910—but when great success was in sight, he failed to operate effectively in the kind of activity at which he was expert. He needed the support of the Princeton seniors and graduates, of Dean West of Princeton, of Harvey the political manager, of Colonel House, of the people of Europe, of the people of America—and he got it. But, at the last moment, he turned them against him, for the destructive impulse had turned him against himself. More clearly than any other great public figure in this country, he killed himself; for he could not accept what his spirit demanded. He was unable to exist without a struggle. It is the tragedy of Wilson, of America, and of peace in the twentieth century, that what he demanded, and the cause he struggled for, were so great. If the cause had succeeded, the struggle would have been ended; if the struggle were ended, there would have been no necessity to feed on the need for support, on the enthusiasm of the response to attack, on the isolation of a spirit convinced it was right, on the conviction that he stood for the good in its endless battle with the evil. If the struggle were ended, his life would have had no further meaning. He prolonged the struggle, and wrecked not only his life, but the values of which he wanted his life to be a symbol. . . .

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If these traits of the public character are correctly analyzed, and if they can be properly related to the League, they may help us to explain the failure of the League as well as the failure of Wilson. And again I make a qualification: the failure of one man does not adequately explain the failure of nations. Yet men shape policy. And in a democracy, especially, we must assume the responsibility of evaluating public leadership; of assessing the men (and their influence) to whom we have delegated authority.

Wilson, we know, made a moral crusade of the League issue as well as of the war. The two years, or perhaps three, from 1917 to 1919, made sudden demands for moral orientation on the American people, after the easygoing years of Roosevelt and Taft. That critical point of toleration, the acceptance or non-acceptance of evil within the moral system, was crossed by Wilson: evil had to be utterly expelled. (What sense of guilt was it, within himself, that made him fight so hard the evil that he found outside himself?) This parenthetical question may never be answered; nevertheless, it matters. The intensity of Wilson's campaign inspired its defeat, and a reaction, in much the same way that the intensity of the Commonwealth period in England inspired the Restoration. And in both counter-revolutionary times, it was significant that artistically creative periods followed the inspired, but in some ways inhibited, periods.

Wilson's isolation carried over into the making of the Treaty of Versailles and the charter of the League of Nations. His people recognized this in their discomfort over his trips to France. Not only was he separated geographically from America; he was also separated politically, and with his experts. We nowhere get the sense of an exchange of feeling and ideas between Wilson and the prime ministers of Europe. The treaty-making process was a battle in which the demanding prophet fought to make his vision real: he could not compromise; he could only, if necessary, surrender. And the less he had to surrender, the more intact his prophecies might remain. When Wilson spoke to the people of Europe, he was their symbol, not their voice. He brought to Europe his ideal, his program, his Fourteen Points. He carried back from Europe a treaty

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and a compact in his dispatch case: a treaty which gave evidence of the damage done to his ideals by the pressure of European forces. But in his mind, he carried his ideals undamaged; for his isolation had never really been broken into, nor the perfection of his hope disturbed. Steffens' shrewd comment implied what had happened: Wilson had been unable to admit his failure. Had he made that admission, he would have had to accept something from Europe, or from the reality of the international situation, and would have had to modify his position. He could do neither. We can only guess at his struggle to preserve himself against his own demands. He alienated his followers, and, in America, he spoke without popular support. The American people sensed this, and gave official recognition to it in both 1918 and 1920.

When Wilson brought the treaty home to justify it before the people, both his Presbyterian necessity and his isolation worked together to force him to enlarge the struggle. He went over the heads of the members of the House and of the Senate, directly to the people. This he had to do, of course, partly because of the political situation, but also because it was personally necessary to Wilson. He could not be satisfied with minor victories when an attack had been made upon his main position. He knew how to win the minor victories: how to manipulate political figures in New Jersey, or in the party conventions. But in 1919, when he felt that victory was in the hands of the people, not in those of the politicians, his political skill was of no use to him. Had his personality been a different one, he might have managed "the little group of willful men" as skillfully as he had managed such groups in the past; but had his personality been different, his treaty would not have been the morally compelling and isolated document that it was. It would have been a weaker treaty, perhaps, and he would have been spared the necessity of counterattacking when attacked.

The historical ifs were of no help to Wilson: nothing spared him, and he could not spare others. Given his nature, given his isolation, given his response to attack, he could spare nothing and had to demand everything. He stood convicted of sacrificing the country's security and American lives, of sacrificing his own ideals to an inter-

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national scheme for making the world safe for democracy. He convicted himself and demanded support. A dictator might do as much, but not a president of a democracy. The peak of intensity had been passed, though Wilson seemed unaware of it. The war had ended, and Wilson seemed to try to keep it going. His last speech at Pueblo, lost in tears, was a speech in the name of the American graves in France. He demanded, in effect, that he be given the responsibility (made guilty) for the men who had been killed; and he demanded that the treaty he had created to pay for that responsibility (and guilt) be accepted in exchange. Assuming so much and demanding so much, it was right, democratically, that the prophet should be denied.

Wilson truly failed in his greatest moment, but that failure was not, as he thought, and as internationally minded historians after him have thought, a failure of American democracy due only to the power of a minority in the American Senate or among the American people. Wilson's failure to secure acceptance of the Treaty of Versailles was more than a repudiation of his policy. It was, more significantly, a repudiation of his kind of prophetic leadership: morally compelling, isolated, aggressive, demanding and finally destructive. The American people must have sensed this destructive impulse. They could see Wilson driving himself to failure, and they knew, in 1919, that he had committed them to more than they were prepared to give. In 1919, the leader and his people were moving in opposite directions. The war was over, but Wilson had to continue the struggle; and before the people could retire him, he had killed himself and his dream.

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We're Selling America Short

BRADFORD SMITH

AT THE END of a six weeks' summer course on the American community, a brilliant young foreign physicist said to me: "If what you have shown us is the real America, why do you Americans work so hard to hide the truth from the rest of the world?"

The physicist was one of several hundred potential leaders from foreign countries brought to this country by the United States government for a year's study and a chance to find out for themselves what America is like.

The course was a combination of lectures, informal discussions, and field trips designed to put the newcomer at ease in an unfamiliar environment. It emphasized the fact that the individual freedom we enjoy in America carries with it a strong moral compulsion to exercise that freedom for the welfare of the community.

This was a new idea to the young physicist. He had heard a lot about American free enterprise and the freedom of the individual. He had seen the results in Hollywood movies, garish comic books, and an excess of material possessions. He knew all about the high American divorce rate, the prevalence of gangsterism and racial prejudice, the corruptness of political machines. But of the everyday life of an American community, he knew nothing at all.

This distorted picture of America was not his fault. The strange fact is that America, which expends more brains on selling than all the rest of the world together, is selling itself short abroad. And it is selling itself short abroad because it is also selling itself short at home. In this moment of crisis, when we need, more than ever, a

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clear idea of what we stand for and where we are heading, a fistful of tired, outworn slogans is being used to explain the greatest social and political achievement the world has ever known. The sacred cows of individualism and unrestricted private enterprise are being sedulously milked, just as if they had not long since gone dry.

There must be some truth in the accusations of foreign observers that we are not a people much given to serious thought, else how would we let a caricature of the real America represent us at home as well as abroad? Granted that free-wheeling individualism and unrestricted competition once had a place in a nation dominated by an expanding frontier, why have we allowed the image to remain when the substance has long faded? Anthropologists have a word for it; they call it cultural lag. Traditions often hang on when the need for them is dead. Our creed of rugged competition is something like tying a Ford to a hitching post.

But what is the American way of life?

This morning, my mail included a notice of a Rotary meeting, an appeal for funds from World Federalists, an announcement of a meeting of the state trustees of Vermont Forums, Inc., some pamphlets published by the Friends, a letter from the Institute of International Education, an invitation to join a sociological association, and a program announcement from an organization new to me—the National Cooperative School for Group Organization and Recreation. During the morning, my wife (who is active in twice as many community services as I am) was out campaigning for the Red Cross. A phone call invited me to speak at a church club, and we were notified of a square dance.

I have always thought of myself as no joiner. Yet when I begin to canvass my activities, I find that I am a member of the town Republican committee and of a special auditing committee elected by the town, a member of a special school committee, a trustee of Vermont Forums, an associate of Bennington College, an ex-director of the Vermont Adult Education Association, former scoutmaster and neighborhood commissioner, member of the Author's League, PTA, Rotary, Sigma Chi, Phi Beta Kappa, the local community club, the Civil Liberties Union, World Federalists—and, no doubt, a lot of other things I've forgotten.

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This is so familiar to American readers as to seem on the dull side. Yet like many things overlooked because they are obvious, it suggests that the essence of American life is *not* primarily competition or individualism. The quality of life in America is determined, not by an insistence on the freedom of the individual, but by what we do with that freedom. Any neutral observer would see at once that all this organizing, all this community of effort, shows a deep conviction that the privilege of freedom carries with it a strong personal moral obligation toward the common good. Americans may be individualists, but they spend more time working for the common welfare than any other people in the world. The system of private enterprise, though it is the basis of an amazing industrial fertility, is not the end product of American life; it is only the instrument. It gives us more leisure time, but much of that time is spent on projects intended to make for better living—not only for the participant as an individual, but for the community.

So the essence of American life turns out to be, not personal freedom or private property in themselves, but the freedom and means to join in voluntary associations for the common welfare.

There is nothing new about this. In fact, there is nothing in American life more sanctified by tradition. Yet we have allowed a false creed to crowd out the real American tradition—the idea of voluntary association as the basis of all human activity—which came to New England with the Pilgrims. This idea began in their church covenant, which was a voluntary association of the members with their God. It continued in the Mayflower Compact, a voluntary association for self-government. Similarly, Plymouth's business affairs were controlled by a contract between all the members and those leaders who, with Governor William Bradford, undertook the colony's trade. Voluntary association for community ends is historically far more American than unrestricted individualism. The essence of it—and of American democracy—is found in the town meeting, which still lives a vigorous life today, as any New Englander knows.

Every important development in American history has come about through a similar voluntary association. It was the Committees of Correspondence which engineered the Revolution. Volun-

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tary associations of free individuals, exercising what the Friends call a concern, set up the underground railroad, got the vote for women, and put an end to exploitive child labor. Even the frontier—that symbol of individualism rampant—was actually settled and populated not by the independent trappers and hunters, but by families traveling together for mutual aid and protection. What, indeed, is more characteristically American than a barnraising or a cornhusking?

No other nation in the world has undertaken so many experiments in community living, or tried so hard to realize the dream of a cooperative society. Whether you look at the New England village republics, or the communal enterprises like Oneida, Brook Farm and Robert Owen's New Harmony, or the religious communities of the Mormons, the Mennonites, the Shakers, or that cherished ideal of most Americans, the home town—you keep meeting the fact that Americans are possessed of a great urge to build something together, then to tinker with what they have built until they have added every kind of accessory improvement, then to move on somewhere and do it all over again—though possibly in an entirely different way. This, indeed, has been the very essence of America since William Bradford of Plymouth—a strangely neglected founder of the American way—labored to give substance to his dream of the beloved community: a people tightly knit in religious faith, self-government and healthy industry, all on the basis of contracts freely entered into. It has been the germ of the American dream ever since.

A mere glance at contemporary America is sufficient to prove that this tradition of community and mutuality is flourishing on all levels and in all areas. Once this activity recognizes its deep American roots and finds the words wherewith to seize our imaginations, we are in for a renaissance that may rival the great periods of emotional-intellectual upsurge in human history. Let me cite a few random samples of what is going on.

By now, everyone knows, or should know, about the Committee for Kentucky—a group of volunteer citizens who, alarmed at the poor schools, poor health and lack of opportunity in their state, organized themselves to do something about it. By getting the facts

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across to the people, then asking them to face both the cost of a remedial program and the cost of failure, they laid the groundwork for an experimental program in the town and county of Henderson. They found the people there eager to cooperate in a program of community improvement. They found that most men want to serve the community, and enjoy working for it. Henderson, Kentucky, through the efforts of its own people, improved health conditions, developed recreational and social services, and acquired a spirit of self-reliance and successful cooperation which was worth as much as the improvements themselves.

Similar stories have been reported from all over America—from Darby, Montana, where a dying lumber town was revived not only economically but spiritually; from Suffern, New York, where a man with a big heart named Tony Cucolo started the Good Neighbor Plan; from Carroll County, Georgia, where a voluntarily organized Service Council revitalized the agricultural, industrial, educational and religious welfare of the area.

One of the most attractive volunteer organizations I have heard of is the Junior Auxiliary of the Hospital Association in Passaic Valley, New Jersey. Here, a high school softball captain decided to do something about the need for funds to build a new hospital. He and his schoolmates organized an association which was soon far ahead of the adult fund-raising group. The tremendous energy of teen-agers produced astounding results. Soon, they had raised enough to pay for the hospital site. But they went right on, giving dinners, variety shows, doing odd jobs, placing and servicing contribution boxes, giving free concerts—all to arouse public interest. They heard of a directory which was to be delivered from door to door, and took on the job at five cents a copy, for a profit of several hundred dollars. They noticed a model house which was attracting no visitors. They got permission to charge a ten cent admission fee, brought six thousand visitors, to the astonishment and delight of the real estate man, and added six hundred dollars to their fund. This experience suggests that all our plans for controlling juvenile delinquency have been wrong whenever they have tried to give the youngsters something. It is only necessary to show them how to give

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themselves to something. No lesson could better lead them to the heart of the American tradition than that of voluntary association for the good of the community, nor better prepare them for useful and exciting lives as adults. Here is a tremendous source of useful energy waiting to be tapped.

Signs as diverse as the square dance revival, the Institute of Human Relations at Yale, and Stuart Chase's recent book, *Roads to Agreement*, indicate an awareness of the exciting future that lies ahead if we can only utilize that deep heritage which, properly understood and fostered, would capture the imagination of a frightened world. One of these signs is the widespread interest in developing new techniques of working together.

Most interesting of these studies is that in group dynamics now going forward on a number of campuses and at the National Training Laboratory in Group Development which is held every summer at Bethel, Maine. Here, a staff of fifty works with a hundred carefully chosen students—most of them professors, ministers, representatives from the armed services, and others in a position to hand on what they learn at Bethel. This unique summer school is given over completely to group meetings and discussions in which the techniques, the frictions, the emotions, the successes and failures of people trying to work together are analyzed, experimented with, improved. The result of all the work in group dynamics is the discovery that people work best when they work voluntarily, without compulsion or authoritarianism—in other words, democratically; and that a group working at a problem comes to think as a group, and to arrive at solutions its members could never have achieved separately. Group dynamics is in its infancy as a science, but already it promises not only to improve the techniques of men working together, but to demonstrate, by carefully controlled experiment, the facts which William Bradford of Plymouth seems to have known intuitively—that the good community is one in which the members are there by choice, under rules made by themselves, and laboring together for mutual benefit.

Another trail-blazing experiment in revitalizing communities through voluntary study groups came out of the Montana Study

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under Baker Brownell. Leading citizens in several Montana towns were encouraged to form groups which would analyze and assay their communities. A thorough outline of topics for such an inventory was developed. In nearly every case, the study group ended by transforming itself into an action group. Out of its study of the town's past usually grew a home-written, home-talent pageant which dramatized the town's background, helped create a spirit of pride, and led to a community-wide action program which reinvigorated the town's economy, improved its health and educational facilities, and made it a lively, stimulating place in which to live and work.

Then there are the many conferences, organized by universities or by business or government or labor, which attempt by cross-fertilizing to open up new potentialities in every area of American life. One of these, recently sponsored by the Advertising Council, had for its subject, "A Free Dynamic Society." Participants included such notables as Chester Barnard, president of the Rockefeller Foundation; Erwin Canham, editor of the *Christian Science Monitor;* Russell Davenport, Peter Drucker, Lewis Galantière, Harry Gideonse, Frank Tannenbaum and Walter Wheeler, president of Pitney-Bowes. Paul Hoffman was moderator. These men exchanged ideas on what gives dynamic impetus to American society. Their conclusions pointed in one direction: not toward individualism or private enterprise (America has no monopoly on these), but to a kind of free and mutual collectivism—a constant exchange of ideas among businessmen, government officials and university professors, and through innumerable conferences and organizations, the underlying motive of which is the improvement and enrichment of American life.

This vast capacity for voluntary activity starts in humble ways familiar to us all, and you do not have to be a college professor or a big business leader to participate. It starts with Cub Scout dens, community clubs and Fifth Avenue Associations, moving up through town, city, state and nation to international organizations, many of which originated in America. The man who works on a local political committee or the woman who raises funds for the Red Cross is part of a chain which stretches across the nation or girdles the earth.

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We are a little sheepish, most of us, about all this organizing, and more than a little prone to apologize for it to strangers or to withdraw from it ourselves. Wherever you go in America, people will tell you that their town is over-organized. But this very defect is proof of the cohesive, cooperative nature of American life as opposed to selfish individualism. It is this energy for doing things together that makes the tremendous amount of freely given, constructive activity possible. One activity tends to fertilize another, one problem solved leads to another needing solution.

Even in that supposed citadel of rugged individualism, private enterprise, the spirit of voluntary association is busily at work. American businessmen today are pooling know-how and sharing trade secrets to a degree little realized by the public. For this, they have a vast number of organizations of their own. The Society of Automotive Engineers, for example, encourages an exchange of ideas which would be rejected by any theory of all-out competition.

There are even signs that businessmen are no longer willing to remain aloof from government on the popular but preposterous belief that you can't mix business with politics. Ralph W. Carney, an industrialist from Wichita, Kansas, not so long ago got up before the Congress of American Industries, sponsored by the National Association of Manufacturers, and said that the only way to be sure of having a good community to live in was for businessmen to get into politics. And he told how business had done just that in Kansas, with conspicuously happy results—efficient executives serving as town officials, and a government serving the community instead of a political machine.

It was with the hope of presenting a part of this picture that I planned a course on the American community for the overseas visitors. In order to see how an American community functions, we took them on a trip to Bennington, Vermont, where, after a view of colonial America as preserved in the beautiful homes and church and museum of Old Bennington, we dropped down into the modern industrial town. We visited the court house, talked with the town manager and one of the selectmen, went to the Red Cross rooms, saw a summer playground functioning under YMCA supervision,

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toured a local industry, the hospital, the library, seeing everywhere how volunteers worked together—Gray Ladies at the hospital, blood donors in the Red Cross program, Scout leaders to supervise recreation. The next time these potential leaders of democracy see a gangster movie, I hope they will think of Bennington, whose voluntary community activities are a good deal more typical of America. I hope they will have learned that, in spite of what we keep saying to the contrary, America is far more social and cooperative than it is individualistic and aggressive.

But how are we to convey this idea to the millions who will never see it for themselves? Everywhere else in the world, the need for making private desires subserve the public welfare is recognized, and the mechanism employed is more and more government. But in America we believe in the individual's responsibility for the public welfare, and we jealously guard this responsibility from a government which always seems to be reaching out to take over. Because the essence of Americanism is the contract, the voluntary association, we are suspicious of assigning to a government bureau any function which can be handled by a non-governmental organization. This is not individualism. It is social responsibility, interpreted as a very personal duty. It explains why we have not needed communism or socialism, for within ourselves we have felt a personal responsibility to do, as individuals, what the socialist would hand over to the state. Religious in origin, made possible by an amazing economic development, and of profound political importance, this fact is of crucial centrality in American history. Yet it has no creed or slogan. It has been neglected by writers and movie makers, so that exceptions like *Our Town* stand out in lonely prominence. Thus, for lack of the right words and ideas to match our actions, we are alienating a world which fears individualism as much as it fears communism. We are losing the battle for men's minds because the concept of individualism is too cold, lonely and selfish to appeal emotionally. The warmth of the cooperating group—men want this even more than they want freedom. As yet we have not shown them that they can have both.

To many in Asia and Europe, the choice today seems to be be-

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tween two tyrannies—communism and individualist materialism. They are not enthusiastic about either, but even in the face of the Communist record for ruthless murder and conquest, its promise of a shared burden is emotionally preferable to the lonely road of individualism. There is no more important job ahead of us, therefore, than to let the world see that in America it is voluntarism—a free, dignified, unregimented working together toward social goals —that dominates our behavior. Perhaps we already have a phrase for it in "team work." In its origin, "team" means family. That comes close to expressing the too long ignored, yet traditional, American ideal of men joined together in a common effort as closely as a family is bound—Bradford's beloved community. If we can make men *feel* that this is what we stand for, we shall have offered an ideal to arouse those who now float apathetically in an eddy between the two tides of ruthless collectivism and selfish individualism.

Great world struggles have often been won against great odds, as was our own Revolution. But they have never been won without faith.

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The Sea Is Water

ANNA BEATRICE MURPHY

Do not speak of the gentle, jewel-encrusted sea.
Do not speak of these fanciful things to me.
—Nor the moods of the sea, temptation nor cruelty.

The sea is but water, moving because it must,
Bearing ships that are built to ride its waves,
Coating their lower parts with saline rust,
Parted by weight of bodies seeking their graves,
Knowing nothing, not even the pull of the moon,
But senseless, insensible, at midnight, at dawn, at noon.

Do not speak of the sea as langorous, glamorous, strong.
The sea is water. All the rest is wrong.

✪ The poems, stories and articles of ANNA BEATRICE MURPHY have appeared in a variety of publications. This is her first appearance in THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR.

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Fire

FLORENCE KIPER FRANK

Flame is his destiny. From out the clash
Of fiery vapors was his planet spewed.
Hero and prey, pursuer and pursued,
He has stalked fire, has fled the burning lash.
Struck from his tool, the accidental flash
Was seed and dominance. He has subdued
Flame to his groping will. The magnitude
Of his long purpose lies within the ash.

He has snared atom, kindled hearthstone, caught
Flame in the bowl, the filament, set the blaze
On scattered altars, fed the boughs to hold
His flickering life against primordial cold.
Shaping time's incandescence, he has wrought
Doom and the living measure of his days.

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The Pagan Altars of Notre Dame

ALLAN TEMKO

ONCE, before Noah was dreamed of, the sea covered all. Ile de France was a salt lake, hundreds of fathoms deep, in which not even the tip of the Eiffel Tower would have been awash. The Atlantic poured over the wide basin of the Seine and flowed to the foothills of the Vosges and the Jura, not far from the Rhine. And since Stonehenge was new, and Britain was not yet an island, hunters could cross on foot from Dover to Calais, chasing abstract reindeer whose horns were simple curves. Europe then could not have looked anything like the Europe on today's map, but the Gods bear some resemblance.

Men adored a stone, a spring, a green tree. They sacrificed to the sun and the moon, and to the brighter stars. They dedicated altars to beasts and reptiles and various birds: to the hawk, the serpent, the hound and the bear. They worshiped a powerful wind which sometimes swept over the uncultivated fields. There was a God in the white waterfall, in every well, in caverns, or where paths met, and on hilltops. The Gods were numerous, fierce, jealous, and as complicated or uncomplicated as the humans who enshrined them; but among these Gods was a Mother Deity, an austere Celtic Madonna who frequently held a child in her arms, and both mother and son have had a certain following in France to this day.

The sea ebbed, and men found a fertile and wooded country where the water had been. It was an ideal seat for a civilization. Great forests, which were not to disappear until after the Middle Ages, stretched for miles along the Seine. The weather was mild. There was grazing land, there was game in the woods, and the system of quiet rivers—the Seine, the Marne, the Oise, the Eure—

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made it relatively easy to travel from place to place. Beyond this, the country was lovely. Wild crocuses sprouted in the meadows and covered the grass like an alcohol flame; finches sang in the forest; and beneath the earth, although these early men did not know how to cut it, the sea had deposited deep bands of fossil rock: tough granite and heavy limestone that one day would be carved into cathedrals. And so the first Parisians settled in Ile de France, bringing with them their Gods and their Arts, for the two were inseparable. On a bend in the Seine they found an island naturally suited for defense, with a low hill on its eastern point; and since the summits of hills were sacred, they built a temple of branches and leaves at the crest, and installed their Gods on Ile-de-la-Cité, more centuries before Adam and Eve than we can remember.

These Gods, or their near descendants, were waiting when the Romans came. Caesar himself was struck by the savage piety of the Gauls and the dogmatic pride with which they defended their Immortals. But, being a Roman, Caesar could describe these rural idols only in Roman terms, much as a Christian in Japan today tries to imagine the Virgin prefigured in the stone image of Kwannon. The Gallic Gods, to Caesar, were Mercury, Mars, Jove and Apollo, and —for want of a better name—Minerva, applied to the Mother Divinity who probably embodied the attributes of a score of Roman Goddesses: Ceres and Proserpine, and perhaps even the chaste Diana among them.

The native Gods outlasted the Romans and the fine Vitruvian city the conquerors constructed on the South Bank of the Seine. Once, in what is now the Latin Quarter, stood a Roman theater, an aqueduct, an arena, splendid residences, and an imperial palace of which nothing remains but the ruins of the *Thermae* that are part of the Cluny Museum. Along the banks of the Seine, on the present site of the Quai de la Tournelle and on the southern shore of the island, was the busy port of the *nautae*, who were not at all simple sailors, but rather early shipping capitalists whose river trade made them the wealthiest mercantile group in Lutetia, as the Gallo-Roman city was called. It was these *nautae* who replaced the wooden Gallic shrine on the Ile with a stone temple, dedicated to the old Gods and the new.

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There can be little doubt which set of Gods the conquered Gauls preferred. In 1711, workmen digging beneath the choir of Notre Dame unearthed four sculpted altars which must have come from this vanished temple of the *nautae*. One stone not only bears an inscription to that effect (*Nautae Parisiaci publice posierunt*), but, more important, also carries the name of the Emperor Tiberius, who reigned during the lifetime of Christ. Here, then, is our first date, and it may be that of the Crucifixion itself! So much the better. We can see what was going on at the other end of the world while the Redeemer was dying in Palestine.

Roman Gods, the official Gods, occupy more than half the faces of these altars, and they are conventional enough. We see a rather unimpressive Jupiter, a Mercury, Vulcan with his mallet, and Castor and Pollux leading their horses—and none of them is very exciting. But the Gallic Gods! Even when they share a stone with their dull Roman neighbors, the Gallic Gods are breathtaking. No other sculptures that belong to our Cathedral (for these pagan altars were drawn from the very foundations of Notre Dame) are more thrilling, except perhaps those of the Saint Anne Portal; and we must spend at least one afternoon studying them in the Grande Salle des Thermes at the Cluny Museum.

The largest altar, which stands about four feet high, belongs to four Gods. On two sides are Jupiter and Vulcan, for whom the sculptor clearly felt no great enthusiasm; they are altogether ordinary figures. But then we turn a corner and step into another world: the green living world of the Gallic Druids who, according to Caesar, were the theocratic rulers of the tribes he vanquished. On this third face of the altar we see a brawny woodsman, naked to the waist, and standing in the midst of foliage with a small hatchet in his hand. Apparently, he is stripping a bush of its leafy branches, an unimportant enough task for a Paul Bunyan, but the determination on this God's face, the set of his chin and eyes, reveals that his work is serious indeed. Perhaps the green branches he is stripping are the sacred mistletoe of the Druids—perhaps not; botanists, who have never seen such a shrub, disagree. Yet the strong presence of Nature in this bas-relief is unmistakable. The tree is growing and green, the God is alive and powerful, and the natural religious force of the sculpture

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flows as freely as the Seine in winter. The God is Esus, and experts tell us that he was a "strong-man god": a divinity for workers or sailors who required muscles for their toil, an ancient relative of Hercules, and a predecessor of the giant Gargantua who, fifteen centuries from now—for we are in the first years of the Christian Era—will carry off the tremendous bells of our Cathedral. We must remember, too, that one day a colossus of Saint Christopher will stand in the nave of Notre Dame, and be destroyed only by the larger titan of Revolution.

Our meeting with Esus, as we look into his dark woodland sanctuary, is an emotional, almost terrifying experience. It is no secret that human sacrifices were employed to appease his huge forester's anger. Criminals, or chance victims of the community if no criminals were available, were tacked to oak trees in his honor, or perhaps burned in the great cages of wicker that Caesar writes about. But Esus, terrible as he is, might seem comparatively tame, merely a crude woodland bully, if we could guess the solemnities with which the Gauls worshiped the beasts on the fourth face of the altar—the Bull and the Three Cranes: *Taurus Trigeranus*.

At first glance, our Bull seems anything but sinister. He, too, is portrayed in the center of a forest, and stands half-hidden by the boughs of willow trees. He is a short, rather chunky little bull, with a certain coyness of expression that would go straight to the heart of Walt Disney. Yet all of the skill of the Gallo-Roman sculptor has been lavished upon him: the clear look of the eyes, the furrows in the handsome brow, the broad strength of the muzzle, are carved with a grace and sureness that not even the Esus received. Over the Bull's back is draped a cloth that may have been a sacrificial robe, and near the robe stand two small wading birds, with a third crane on top of his head. The scene is singularly tranquil, and we may listen for common robins singing in the willows; but somehow we feel ill at ease with this sturdy little bull and his three magical birds: there is a brooding secret in this clearing which is forever lost, as irretrievable as the strange battle smiles of the warriors on the frieze of the Parthenon. M. Czarnowski, who knows these altars to their last details, has taken pains to demonstrate that perhaps the Bull is a cousin of the mythical beast who swam to Crete with Europa, but

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our own guesswork is as valid as his, and we may have as much fun as we like speculating about this father of all Toros. Concerning the Cranes, M. Czarnowski is much more precise. He tells us that in the Celtic mythology they were considered birds of wisdom, announcers of the seasons and guides of travelers. They were also, he adds, messengers of divine vengeance—vengeance which in this case could mean being stuck to oaks with javelins.

Before we leave the Salle des Thermes, there is one more altar that requires an examination. This is a flat stone, scarcely eighteen inches high, and on one of its four sides is the curious face of Cernunnos, still another Gallic Immortal. We know almost nothing about him except his looks, but this is enough. Cernunnos is an elderly monster, with a rough beard, and eyes that burn unforgettably from deep within the stone. One immediately attempts to avoid his stare, but this is difficult. The eyes glower relentlessly even when we try to look at his ears, which of course aren't ears at all but twin horns with a heavy ring suspended from the arc of each.

These Gallic Gods died hard, and, if we study the amusements of the present-day French on a Saturday night at the Cirque d'Hiver, may be said not to have died yet. The Roman Gods, however, fell easily, long before the Empire. From Asia Minor, the resistless Christians marched over Europe on foot, sailed the Mediterranean, crossed in caravans to Carthage; and soon, sometime during the reign of the Emperor Decius (A.D. 201-250), the Church felt strong enough to evangelize Gaul.

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Shackled Scholarship in Japan

HUGH and MABEL SMYTHE

PRIOR TO WORLD WAR II, Americans knew very little about academic life in Japan. They had only limited contact with, and practically no interest in, things Japanese. There was little discussion of academic standards and scholarship, except what could be gleaned incidentally from the few and highly selected Japanese who came to the United States to study. Since the war, the most extensive experience Americans have ever had in this Far Eastern nation has focused attention upon hitherto unfamiliar aspects of Japanese life and culture, including scholarship.

If by scholarship we mean all of the activities and attitudes encompassed in the sincere search for truth—intellectual curiosity, the pursuit of accurate and well-disciplined learning, the development of knowledge as well as its mastery, and the respect for learning, wherever found—then it must be admitted that the present state of Japanese scholarship is far from encouraging.

What is responsible for this state of affairs? In general, the responsibility would seem to center around four major factors, listed here in order of their magnitude: (1) a tradition of non-cooperation among scholars; (2) the *daibatsu* phenomenon; (3) scholasticism, or the traditional lecture method; and (4) lack of emphasis upon individual student performance.

The first of these is an academic characteristic that strikes with tremendous impact the American teacher visiting in Japan: the lack of cooperation on the part of individuals in learned and academic circles, the unwillingness to share knowledge or make available to colleagues the results of individual research. A Japanese scientist

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living in Kobe recently reported the following in a letter to the editor of the *Mainichi* on November 18:

> Recently, I received kind advice from an American professor, an authority on analytical chemistry, whom I had asked to review my treatise. I was not acquainted with him at the time and I only knew his name through a chemical book which I had read at the SCAP library. At first, I did not expect such a courteous letter from him. Therefore, my joy was far beyond description when I really got his answer. At the same tim, I was greatly moved by the kindness of the American scientist. In Japan I could never have received such warm treatment from a prominent professor . . . who is a total stranger to me.

This attitude has been confirmed by several of our Japanese colleagues, and by professors we have met at professional gatherings, who have exclaimed in delighted surprise over the willingness of American scholars to answer requests for information or advice.

Much of this prevailing attitude is grounded in a culture which is highly formalistic and strongly tradition-bound. Face-saving is as strong in academic circles as in other parts of Japanese life. Faculty sessions are noted for their reserved atmosphere; no one wants to voice an opinion lest he be criticized later by his co-workers for having spoken out of turn, or condemned for having said something foolish. At the national and regional meetings of learned bodies which we have attended, few questions have been asked, and these have been noted for their general, rather than specific, character. On the whole, the give-and-take, the willingness to share and learn from each other, the generally free atmosphere in which American learned life moves, seem to be absent from the scholarly world of Japan. The characteristic sense of restraint radically blocks healthy growth in academic circles. Discouraging to young, ambitious minds, it tends to keep the scholarly world in a strait jacket of formality, which hampers the free quest for knowledge and retards the vitality of Japanese intellectual life.

The second factor, the phenomenon of *daibatsu*, as it exists in Japan today, is peculiar in its present form to Japanese circles alone. *Dai* is a shortened form for *daigaku*, or university, while *batsu* means clique. Hence, the phenomenon refers to the "university clique."

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Just as the octopus business *zaibatsu* dominated and had a stranglehold on Japan's economic life, so has *daibatsu*, and particularly *Todaibatsu*, the Tokyo University clique, a death grip on the world of scholarship. Its tentacles reach even further, into practically every section of Japanese life where individuals of some degree of formal schooling must function. *Todaibatsu* means that, unless you are an alumnus of Tokyo University, your chances of developing whatever scholastic ability you may possess, of securing teaching positions, of publishing the results of research, of getting a hearing for your intellectual views—all are limited by the approval or disapproval of the members of the inner circle of *Todaibatsu*.

To quote a recent editorial in the *Nippon Times* (December 6, 1951):

> Graduation from a very limited class of the "better" universities is the only key to a successful career in government service, in the medical profession, or in a major commercial or industrial corporation. A young woman who hopes to qualify for a "good" matrimonial life must possess the recommendation of a "good" schooling, to be a graduate of a "recognized" school. . . . Careers in government service, business or industrial firms, or other fields of adult endeavor should not be predicated on a diploma from a certain school, but should be conditioned on the existing and potential capabilities of the candidate.

Accordingly, it is not difficult to understand why students feel as they do about less influential universities. Recently, we asked one hundred and fifty students of a lesser known national university to explain why they had decided to study there. Only two students said that they thought it was an especially good place to obtain an education. Others cited such factors as nearness to their homes, inadequate funds to go elsewhere, or vague miscellaneous generalities. Forty-two of them said, frankly and spontaneously, that they had had to come to this university because they failed to pass the entrance examination of a better one. It is possible that even a larger number had some such reason, since many of the answers given were obviously evasive.

The restrictive influence of *daibatsu* extends downward, so that even the opportunities of members of the inner sanctum are limited in proportion to what may be described as their "consistency" in

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Todai lineage. The all-powerful clique within the inner circle is composed of those who are alumni of *ichu-ichiko* (the first middle school set up in Tokyo), and *ichiko* (the first high school established in Tokyo), as well as Tokyo University. So strong an influence does *daibatsu* wield over the scholastic life of Japan that faculties in the universities and colleges, and teachers in schools on subordinate levels, have come to accept the fact that their opportunities for promotion and advancement are governed by this feature in the educational world; and, in general, they make no effort to combat it.

This *daibatsu* arrangement may be explained best in terms of the general Japanese culture, rather than as a unique development in academic circles. A professor of Tokyo University, in a recent magazine article, blames the social system of Japan for the general gap between democratic ideals and the prevailing means of attaining success. Writing on "Japan's Social Setup," in the September, 1951, issue of *Tembo,* Professor Takeyoshi Kawashima said:

> The secret of success in [Japanese] life lies in the entry or the establishment of profitable relationships and keeping them up successfully. . . . Thus, one who wants to succeed in life must enter into a personal relationship with men of influence. . . . It is very difficult to rise simply by dint of ability and merit. It sometimes happens in life that one has to state one's opinion to one's superior who holds a different view. It is on such an occasion that a supreme difficulty presents itself. To confute the other party in argument is a thing that must be carefully avoided. . . . [One] must pretend that one's opinion is quite worthless, but that one is offering it at a venture.

This sort of behavior is directly antagonistic to the free exchange of information and the recognition of scholarship whenever and among whomever it is found. It is not possible for true scholarship to exist when it is fettered by any system in which personal relationships are the controlling element; nor, in a democratic society, can such a system be condoned. It may be impossible for any society to eliminate *all* inequalities based upon alignments with persons of influence; but it is certainly essential that the ideal be kept constantly in mind.

The following are examples of how *daibatsu* operates and serves to restrict Japanese scholarship. A young scholar, engaged in the

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study of cellulose chemistry at a chemical laboratory in Tokyo, published some brief articles from his research. When he had completed his work and was planning to present it as a dissertation, he asked a certain professor, then on the faculty of an imperial university, to review the thesis and give him the benefit of his criticism and advice. The professor refused even to look at the thesis because the young man was a graduate of a pharmaceutical college and not an alumnus of the university in question.

Another instance is the case of Dr. Tomitaro Makino, world famous botanist. He could not become a regular professor of Tokyo University, but was obliged to submit to the lesser rank of "permanent lecturer," solely because he was a self-made scholar and not a member of *Todaibatsu*. Although his knowledge of systematic botany was unquestioned, university regulations, based on academic sectionalism, prevented him from being promoted. Similarly, it is almost certain that if Dr. Hideyo Noguchi had remained in Japan, he could never have distinguished himself in the field of medicine. Without the help of the Rockefeller Foundation, his genius would never have had full play.

It should be pointed out here that, while *Todaibatsu* is the most influential, other *daibatsu* prevail on regional and local levels. *Keidaibatsu* (Keio University), *Kyodaibatsu* (Kyoto University), and so on, all function in the same manner to exercise control over scholarly advancement. *Todaibatsu*, however, is the leader, and has most widely affected Japanese learned life.

The *daibatsu* system also results in a tendency, on the part of universities, to employ mainly their own graduates. This kind of inbreeding retards the exchange of ideas so essential to the growth and stimulation of real scholarship. Those in authority in the universities undoubtedly prefer the tighter controls which this system makes possible, but significant, active scholarship cannot be expected to flourish under such conditions.

The third factor tending to restrict Japanese scholarship is the scholasticism found in the traditional lecture method, which is the standard teaching procedure in Japanese higher educational institutions. As practiced, the lecture method discourages individual

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thought and expression; the teacher, welcomed with a deep bow from his students, passes down his knowledge and opinions to those of a lower stratum. Generally, no one questions the things he says; no one suggests that his information is inaccurate or insufficient: his word is accepted as final. Free discussion and exchange of ideas between teacher and student are absent. The disciplined, submissive student gains preference at the expense of the more original, brilliant and energetic one.

The repetitiveness of the lecture method is maximized by the fact that, under the traditional system, too many instructors lecture year after year from notes compiled when they were students, or when they first assumed their posts as instructors, years before. Each continues to lecture from this antiquated material since there is little stimulus for injecting new and contemporary ideas into his general outline. When a teaching manner inhibited by rigid formalism and generations of tradition is added to stale material, there is little chance to stimulate scholarship.

Lack of incentive for consistent personal performance by the students is the fourth factor which inhibits the development of Japanese scholars and scholarship. Because of the entrance examinations held by the universities, the student works hard prior to his admission to the university. But once he has succeeded in gaining admission, the incentive to continue to do his best withers. Being a university student carries prestige in itself, and this academic distinction is emphasized by the wearing of uniforms. Although the Occupation removed this requirement in order to decrease the sense of regimentation considered inimical to the personal freedoms of democracy, the wearing of uniforms is still customary.

Once the student has entered the university, his performance—excellent, average or poor—depends almost solely upon his own initiative. Little recognition is given to those of superior merit, and failing grades are seldom given to any student who has attended class and taken the examination. In some institutions with which we are acquainted, a student may withdraw from any course at will—even a week or two before the final examination. As might be expected, "shopping around" for courses is standard practice.

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The element of competition is almost completely absent from the student's world of study, and whether or not he does well in his courses need not concern him. He is aware that, in his culture, he already occupies a position of some significance. After graduation, even if he is unsuccessful in securing a job with one of the large firms, he can almost surely get a job in a small town, village or rural area, since the provincial executive is only too glad to have a university man on his staff. It is unthinkable for an employer to ask to see the student's academic record. Even in large firms, the school records counts for nothing since one enters their employment via competitive examinations. As a result, even students of potentially superior ability often waste their talents because there is no encouragement or need to exert themselves; an excellent rcord is no better than a mediocre one in securing a job. They realize that what they know at the moment of the examination is all that matters.

The lack of emphasis upon personal scholastic achievement was forcefully demonstrated in the Autumn of 1951 when the Fulbright program began to operate in Japan. For the first time, applicants had to submit transcripts of their records. When it was made clear to them that these records would be important in helping the fellowship committee reach a decision, many of them were appalled. Their dismay was even more pronounced when they learned that these records would be sent to institutions in America to which they were asking to be admitted for study and research. Faculty members dolefully admitted that they had not done so well in school, since there had been no reason for extra exertion when they had been students. They realized that their scholarship would have to stand the test of objective and comparative scrutiny, and they knew that many of them would certainly not appear to advantage. The competitive system of Western democracies may not be the answer for Japan; it is difficult to introduce any particular practice into a vastly foreign culture. But it cannot be denied that the present system fails to produce persistent scholarly endeavor on the part of the students.

One other aspect of the problem of scholarship should be mentioned. The complexity of the Japanese language is discouraging to young people who might be encouraged to expand their interests.

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Accelerated progress in reading is difficult with a non-phonetic written language, and the length of time necessary for learning to read the simplest adult books confines even a bright child to special children's books throughout most of his years in public school. The important early years of education, when a child can be stimulated to do so much, are concentrated upon the sheer mechanics of learning to read. His thinking processes are sidetracked while he memorizes characters and practices writing them. These wasted years can never be replaced. At the same time, adult scholars are restricted by the confines of the written language. Since broadening one's scholastic horizon requires learning a new set of characters for each additional field, there is a tendency toward too narrow a specialization. In this modern world, where fields of knowledge are becoming constantly more integrated, the divisiveness of the language is a real threat.

The deficiencies in Japanese scholarship have been most vividly demonstrated and brought home to the Japanese since 1949. In that year, under a five-year educational reorganization plan, the central government in Tokyo increased the number of national universities from the former nine imperial institutions to seventy-one. These newer national universities were formed mainly by combining local commercial colleges, old *kotogakkos* (which did work between the junior high school level and the junior college level), and higher normal or educational schools, as well as some special schools which formerly taught agriculture, languages, forestry and so on. The former faculties of these converted schools now compose the universities' teaching staffs. It is obvious to the Ministry of Education and other educational authorities that such faculties are far below the standard required of universities. But what is even more significant is that it has been impossible to find anything like a suitable number of qualified scholars to take over the leading professorships, deanships and other administrative positions. Today, there is a serious shortage of qualified personnel to staff these newer schools of higher learning. The problem is complicated by the fact that the traditional prestige of faculty members is not dependent on academic research or competence.

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The consequences of these deficiencies are now being felt in Japan. This is a time when the nation, after a decade of war, defeat, suffering and occupation, must again take her place among the family of nations. She must face new problems engendered by a disastrous past and a tension-pervaded future. Solid scholarship must help guide the nation back to a position of strength and dignity. Now is an ideal time for Japan to rid herself of an age-old academic bureaucracy, and to promote the development of democracy in her academic world. Merit must take precedence over university or personal ties. There must be more sharing of ideas and free exchange of information. The older scholars must forsake exclusivism and mingle with those who look to them for direction and help. These senior intellectual leaders must take under their wings the younger, promising individuals, and encourage them with a warmth and understanding that will make them develop and fulfill their potentials. Japanese scholarship must undergo a change in style, foster an increase in integration, and develop a new tradition. It must instill in the younger scholars a desire to know, and create among the older ones a willingness to share. Only by loosening its bonds can Japanese scholarship make use of its best minds, both young and old, to foster that common understanding essential in a world which has shrunk in time and space.

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Isolationism Since 1914

SELIG ADLER

ON THE EVE of the presidential campaign, there is increasing speculation about a Republican return to isolationism. This, of course, will depend upon world events and the outcome of the Taft-Eisenhower duel for control of the party. The Republicans have not forgotten the political asset of isolationism in their heyday of the twenties, nor can they fail to recall the potency of this issue in the unceasing fight against the New Deal, its heirs and assigns. Whether they will now take the risk of such a position is unpredictable. But it is certain that any isolationist position today would have to be based on entirely new arguments, assumptions and political groupings.

The isolationism that swept the country after 1919 was part of the nostalgia for the "Garden of Innocence" of pre-1914 days. Warren Gamaliel Harding, "the great and good poker player," reflected the longing for cigar store wooden Indians, the *Police Gazette* and mustache cups. "Back to Normalcy" meant back to an age of no flivvers, no high cost of living, no small and oppressed nations, no grisly Reds, no mandates and no League of Nations. Few Americans now believe possible a return to such a paradise. We are reluctantly reconciled to chaos. To our generation, the antebellum stereotype is made up of unemployment figures and sit-down strikes, recession and appeasement. The "hungry thirties" and alternating hot and cold war have destroyed much of "The Promise of American Life." We no longer believe that meddling in the affairs of other nations has cost us our tranquility. This quaint theory runs right against the gruesome fact that to save our way of life, we must give the free nations reason to resist aggression. And that

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means leadership and copious transfusions of treasure and even blood.

Thirty years ago, military men, with few exceptions, held that our continent was invulnerable, and that no one would dare attack our outlying possessions. If European turmoil threatened our interests, the situation could be saved once more by timely intervention. Today, even the "Formosa-first" senators have discarded such assumptions. We are far more jittery now than ever before in our history. As Gerald W. Johnson puts it, we used to think that we could lick any coalition hurled against us. The proposition now having been twice proved, we doubt it ourselves. Given the present climate of opinion, no party could make even a semi-plausible case for isolation by again torturing Washington's Farewell Address out of context and adding to it an outworn military shibboleth.

The League of Nations appeared to most Americans merely as an adventure in idealism. To Europe, it was as much of a necessity as the United Nations is for us today—an outside chance for peace. Hence, after 1920, Europe became increasingly pro-League, while American determination to stay out stiffened with each year. With the destruction of the myth of American security, isolationists must now count on a real, material interest in international organization. Nor are we so apt to be lulled by the "drowsy syrups of prosperity" today. More than once, prosperity has acted as an opiate to quiet the average man's interest in troublesome but remote problems. Today's boom is so intimately connected with these vexing problems that the wheels of industry turn because of the threat of war. This confusion has given business repeated but dangerous stimulation. To posit our prosperity on separation from old-world damnation would be to put a low premium on the intelligence of the electorate. Isolationists used to argue that we could maintain our way of life by refusing to be the "sugar-daddy" of the world. Today, any alternative to such generosity means the imminent fall of potential allies into Communist hands.

Another prop of isolation that has withered away is its relation to the Monroe Doctrine. In the twenties, a metropolitan daily stated that it believed "strictly in the Monroe Doctrine, in our Constitution, and in the laws of God." Many argued that the League would hinder our expansion southward, would destroy the Doctrine and

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the privilege of the United States to interpret that document as it saw fit. Harding said that he would rather "make Mexico safe and set it aglow with the light of new-world righteousness, than menace the health of the republic in old-world contagion." That progressive imperialist, Albert J. Beveridge, wanted to occupy Mexico but regretted that "our muscles have become too flabby and our disposition too indolent for such manly exertion." Who would want to add to our existing burdens the policing of Mexico? Who would make vulnerable our Latin-American flank by again insisting that the Monroe Doctrine was ours alone, to have and to hold? Yet all of these tenets were held by the nationalists who made common cause with those liberals who thought the League an agent of capitalist imperialism!

Would-be isolationists should also remember that our relationship to the western nations has undergone revolutionary changes. There is neither as much pro or anti-British feeling as there used to be. Our diplomatic rapprochement with Britain reached its crest during the First World War, when even school textbooks were rewritten to mirror the new cordiality. Organizations, magazines and newspapers devoted to cementing friendship between the two nations were the order of the day. The movement was particularly strong among the Anglo-Saxon ethnic group, Protestant clergymen, certain foreign newspaper correspondents, and college professors. The inevitable reaction set in, led by the Irish and German-Americans, and supported by liberal groups who opposed British imperialism. When Wilson refused to go along at Versailles on the question of Irish "self-determination," he alienated the Hibernian wing of his party. Even such typically non-Irish senators as Henry Cabot Lodge and Robert M. La Follette capitalized upon "Martyred Ireland." The liberals added India to the story and called for insulation against the most greedy "land-grabber" in history. Old Tom Watson of Georgia, ex-Populist turned nationalist, told the Senate: "Liberty lighting the world! And now we league ourselves with those who are trampling out the liberties of the world in India, in China, in Siberia, in Syria and in Mesopotamia." Today, much of the pro-British sentiment among the elite has been dissolved by the British experiment in socialism. At the same time, British with-

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drawal all over the world has drawn the fangs of the old charge of imperialism. Some Americans even lament this liquidation of the empire, for the new colonial nations are too susceptible to the virus of communism. This change in position is most marked among American Catholics. Only yesterday, many in this group could be counted on to support isolationism; today, they turn to the United Nations and collective action as a bulwark against the U.S.S.R. The belligerent anti-communism of the Irish, based on religious grounds, has altered their traditional, unyielding isolationism.

A familiar cliché was that the First World War had merely transferred the seat of aggressive militarism from Berlin to Paris. Senator Frank Brandegee told his colleagues in 1923: "Europe has been an armed camp and has been quarreling ever since the dawn of history." Will Rogers used his homely humor to preach isolation by saying: "Why, if they had Niagara Falls, they would have had eighty-five wars over it . . . to see who would be allowed to charge admission to see it." Especially after the invasion of the Ruhr, it was freely charged that France reneged on her war debt in order to build up an army dangerous for the peace of the continent. How strange that argument now sounds! We fear that France has lost her will to fight, and every story of her revived military spirit brings cheer to American hearts. The argument of a warlike Europe has so completely turned that the present variety of isolationist has to use it in reverse—there is no sense in aiding these countries until they prove their willingness to defend themselves.

The former linchpin of the isolationist coalition of "America Firsters," dissenting nationalist groups, liberals and revolutionaries, was the Treaty of Versailles and the closely related question of war guilt. The German-Americans formed the powerful Steuben Society after 1918 and subsidized the publication of magazines and books. They applauded when Borah said: "The League fastened the awful Versailles Treaty upon the world. To my mind, that is the most iniquitous treaty of peace ever drawn." Liberal groups professed to be internationalists, but opposed the League because it was tied to that "body of death," the peace settlement. The strange political grouping of liberals and conservatives, nationalists and utopian

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visionaries, those who thought that the League went too far and those who thought that it did not go far enough, found a common meeting ground in the concerted attack against the Treaty and in the theory that we had intervened in 1917 because of a conspiracy of the Wall Street bankers and the munitions makers. No opportunities for such a coalition exist today. Treaties after 1945 were made in sporadic fashion, and there is little to attack. Nothing like the war guilt controversy has allied liberal internationalists and hyphenate groups. The Second World War was fought without the heights of Wilsonian idealism or the buncombe of George Creel. Hence, despite some potent "neo-revisionism," only a few hold with the late Charles A. Beard that F.D.R. "planned it that way."

If the old arguments and methods of the isolationists are stale, so are their chances of creating formidable political blocs. The explanation for the strange isolationist bedfellows of yesteryear is to be found in the history of American liberalism. The word "liberal" was introduced into American politics shortly before the First World War. Herbert Croly of the *New Republic* and Oswald Garrison Villard of *The Nation* are good examples of the highly vocal group which wished to separate itself from the party regulars on one hand, and the social revolutionaries on the other. Most liberals supported American intervention in 1917 and then demanded, with Wilson, a just and lasting peace. By 1919, they had come to hate the President quite as much as did Lodge or Brandegee, but for different reasons. The liberals were usually theoretical internationalists. They habitually exaggerated both the perfectibility of man and the evil machinations which were impeding progress. Villard warned, as Wilson sailed for Paris, that if this was a war for democracy, "by its fruits we shall know it." Walter Lippmann wrote that, if Versailles resulted in "a peace that can be maintained only by the bayonet, we shall . . . find our own security in this hemisphere." The liberals turned upon the President with accusations of "secret agreements secretly arrived at," surprise at the "greed" and "selfishness" of our allies, and criticism of the League's structure. So they joined the nationalists, Marxists and partisan Republicans to denounce Wilson's work. The anti-Red crusade and the general re-

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action following the war confirmed their worst fears. These liberals and their radical associates spearheaded the assault on all existing forms of international association. Unlike the nationalists, they sponsored alternative schemes—outlawry of war, codification of international law, a "real" World Court, and other short cuts to Utopia. Their bible became John Maynard Keynes's *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*. Thus, they failed to see Versailles as normal diplomatic give and take, and over-emphasized economic factors. The Keynesian arguments became the bridge which united the liberals with truly isolationist and hyphenate elements. John Dewey preached the gospel from the New School for Social Research, along with Thorstein Veblen, James Harvey Robinson, Harry Elmer Barnes, Harold Laski and Charles A. Beard. It is a nice problem to estimate how much they added to the potpourri of those years of acute disillusionment. As to foreign affairs, their message was that the League was corrupt and imperialistic, and that Wilson had betrayed liberalism to allow Europe to play us for "suckers." Some of the liberals realized that they were aiding the standpatters. Villard wrote that he always wanted "sixty feet" between *The Nation* and Henry Cabot Lodge; Lippmann later regretted that his group had supplied the "Battalion of Death" with so much ammunition. But the damage was done, and the isolationists gained much from liberals who were working for opposite goals.

McCarthy, Capehart, Cain, Langer and Dirksen have little hope today for such unexpected reinforcement. Liberalism has been absorbed into the blood stream of the New Deal or the rump of American communism. Surviving American Socialists do not regard the United Nations, as they did the League, as a capitalist union. With but few exceptions, the liberals are a million miles away from the isolationists—this time, in means as well as ends. There can be no succor from this group in the foreseeable future.

If the intellectual ammunition of isolationism was supplied by disillusioned liberals, a political phenomenon furnished the vocal leadership, especially in the Senate. The Progressive split of 1912 left a backwash of able politicians looking for amnesty for rebellion, to-

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ward the formation of another party, or merely to maintain their chronic insurgency. All of these groups found isolationism attractive. In some cases, it was a convenient stand to divert attention from an unpatriotic war record. Borah, perennial maverick, could be counted on to deliver his forceful speeches against the "sale of our country" at the slightest deviation from our self-imposed parochial status. Isolationism was his bond of union with the Old Guard of the party he had so often vexed. Through their influential magazine, the La Follettes helped make insularity a major tenet of farm bloc politics. With Brookhart, Shipstead and Ladd, they paved the way for the later curious influence of Gerald P. Nye. Hiram Johnson, anxious to be President, cement his alliance with Hearst, vote protectionist, and still be counted a progressive, found isolationism the catalytic agent. At least on this issue, he could speak without twinge of conscience; in this haven of regularity, he could find forgiveness for his Bull Moose days. Cole Blease, South Carolina antiwar Democrat, charged that England wanted us to give allegiance to a "super-government, a flag three-balled, a pawn-lure flag, representing the imperialistic and militaristic superstate, the League of Nations." The present political situation offers no such similar possibilities for isolationism. The ex-Progressives and Populists are dead or forgotten, there is no real third party in sight, there are few wartime heresies to forgive, and the South generally follows Truman's leadership on matters of foreign policy.

There are other factors which should give pause to those who dream of a renascent policy of isolation from world affairs. Repeated Democratic victories since 1932, despite the opposition of the overwhelming majority of newspapers, point to a decline in the influence of the press. The Hearst and Munsey chains of papers, the *Chicago Tribune* and *Kansas City Star*, tapped pockets of cynical, reactionary, sometimes jingoistic and always isolationist feeling. McCormick is still at it, but with Hearst gone to his well-earned reward, Bertie is an "isolated" isolationist. After Versailles, America felt secure, and we could afford the double talk of a Harding or the monosyllabic platitudes of a Coolidge. Today, the government exerts a conscious effort to make the voters understand its foreign policy.

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Overnight trips to Europe, a World Assembly of Youth, televised international conferences and speeches, have made the masses conscious of other peoples. Like medicine, science, law, philosophy and education, foreign affairs have become popularized. Clergymen please their secularly oriented parishioners by talking of world issues. Bankers, labor leaders, leagues of "gadget-emancipated" women voters, merchant and professional groups, student associations—all earnestly discuss foreign affairs. In this age of threat, even children in the classroom fear for their bodily security. Their parents look to the government for help. An answer would be required from any party in power, and that answer could hardly be to retire behind our sea walls and so shorten our strategic goals as to let Russia dominate all of Europe.

One can, of course, retort that the Midwest is still strongly isolationist. But the causal factors are declining. Remoteness from salt water is not the protection that it once seemed. You may hold that economics and national ties make this section anti-British and pro-German, but who today fears London's gold policies? Who now charges that internationalism is a front to enable the Bank of England to dominate the world? The passage of time has somewhat Americanized certain German and Scandinavian elements, and this process will go on. The Nordics can hardly be pro-German after Hitler's invasions, and it would seem that few German-Americans today want to remember the Reich with much fondness. The German-Irish coalition which helped make Chicago the citadel of isolationism is all but dissolved. The strength of ethnic groups from Russia and her satellite nations is apparently outside the orbit of effective homeland influences because of the Communist issue. Prosperity in the American heartland has lessened the charge that our wars are plotted by munitions makers and Wall Street bankers. The farm lobby has little frustration to project upon J. P. Morgan or anyone else. Above all, the specter of Red aggression has dissipated the cleavage between East and West, between newcomers and those who have forgotten their national origins.

Is it too much to hope that the grim realities of this century have made the American people more mature, and less vulnerable to

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confused thinking? Between Versailles and Pearl Harbor, all groups, including the isolationists, wished to follow the arrow marked "To Peace." Some 1,200 societies were formed in the interest of understanding foreign relations, but they worked at cross purposes. Invariably, they failed to think in long-run terms; and they usually made the mistake of believing that peace, rather than national security, should be the goal of our foreign policy. Even feeble positive steps were thwarted by senators who preached peace, but who invariably opposed cooperation and relied on minimal armed forces.

Nothing seems more certain than the passing of this type of isolationism. The current issue of American participation in world affairs has entirely changed within a generation. All admit that the new weapons have jeopardized our security. The bifurcation of the world between East and West necessitates action. The very word "isolation" is taboo among those who, only yesterday, believed that we could maintain peace by minding our own affairs. The new cry is that our strategic goals, with the exception of Asia, are too ambitious; and that we should follow Hoover's advice and shorten our defensible frontiers. Taft has changed, and now asserts that we should follow our present global policy, but do it at bargain prices. In the event that this thinking should dominate our foreign policy after January 20, 1953, the greatest danger would be that our European program would be one of too little and too late.

Assuming no such change in world conditions as a Communist blow against Western Europe, which would make all of us reconsider the problem of hemispheric security, the major outlines of our present policy are apt to continue. Even if the outcome of the present election could somehow be distorted into a mandate for "neo-isolationism," there are likely to be few radical departures. As Churchill inherited the conditions which faced Attlee and shaped his actions accordingly, so any new President would be confronted by the grim facts which dictated the Truman policies. A hostile Russia would continue to weld the free nations together in opposition, and that means close cooperation with Western Europe. The United Nations would continue to be used as a convenient instru-

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ment of American foreign policy, regardless of the final outcome in Korea. Once saddled with responsibility, any of the foreseeable presidential candidates would realize that the United Nations has had its successes—in Iran, in Israel and in Indonesia—as well as its failures. A closer economic and social union among the non-Communist nations is part of the thought-pattern of our generation. Such thinking has the almost unanimous support of the intellectuals, who, it is permissible to hope, will continue to share in the making of our foreign policy. The elimination of the United Nations, besides destroying valuable economic and social channels of intercourse, would merely force the United States to shoulder more responsibility than it does at present. Name calling, à la McCarthy, will no doubt continue. The internationalists in both parties will be unable to move toward world organization at a much faster pace than public opinion will allow. Eventually, however, the impact of our shrinking world will have its effect upon public opinion and Congress. The result will be a relegation of isolationism to the storehouse of many other once useful, but now outworn, "frames of reference."

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Portrait

Christian Gauss

EDMUND WILSON

Several years ago, on the occasion of Christian Gauss's seventieth birthday, THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR *printed a composite portrait of Christian Gauss as one of its series of portraits of great scholars. This composite portrait consisted of pieces about Dean Gauss by Marjorie Nicolson, R. P. Blackmur and Donald Stauffer. At that time, Edmund Wilson was also invited to contribute, but was unable to do so. Since Dean Gauss's death, however, Mr. Wilson has written and submitted this study which seemed to the Editors so extraordinarily good that we felt it belonged in the series despite the fact that we have already had one "portrait" of Christian Gauss.*—EDITOR.

When Christian Gauss of Princeton died on November 1, 1951, I was asked by the Princeton *Alumni Weekly* to write something about his influence on my generation at Princeton. I sent the editor, who wanted a column, only part of what I had written in response to this request, and even of this he was able to publish only part. This has led me to try to put together a memoir that could stand as a more adequate tribute to a man whose importance to those students with literary talents or tastes who graduated in the early nineteen hundreds cannot be overestimated. We knew Christian Gauss at that time as head of the department of Romance languages, which was largely his own creation, and as teacher of two brilliant courses—in Dante and in French Romanticism—that had become extremely popular. He was not to become dean of the College till 1925. So I shall be mainly occupied here with his activities as a teacher of literature, rather than as an official of the University.

As a professor of French and Italian, then, one of the qualities that distinguished Gauss was the unusual fluidity of mind that he preserved through his whole career. A teacher like Irving Babbitt was a dogmatist who either imposed his dogma or provoked a strong opposition. Christian Gauss was a teacher of a different kind—the kind who starts trains of thought that he does not himself guide to conclusions, but leaves in the hands of his students to be carried on by themselves. The student might develop,

© EDMUND WILSON, distinguished critic and novelist, is the author of, among other books, *The Wound and the Bow, Memoirs of Hecate County, Axel's Castle* and *Classics and Commercials.* This portrait of Christian Gauss will be included in Mr. Wilson's new book, *The Shores of Light: A Literary Chronicle of the Twenties and Thirties,* to be published this Fall by Farrar, Straus and Young.

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extend them, transpose them into different terms, build out of them constructions of his own. Gauss never imposed, he suggested; and his own ideas on any subject were always taking new turns: the light in which he saw it would be shifted, it would range itself in some new context. It bored him, in his course on French Romanticism, to teach the same texts year after year; and with the writers that he could not get away from, he would vary the works read. With the less indispensable ones, he would change the repertory altogether. If Alfred de Vigny, for example, had been featured in the course when you took it, you might come back a few years later and find that he had been pushed into the background by Stendhal. Christian would have been reading up Stendhal, and his interest in him would seem almost as fresh as if he had never read him before. He would have some new insights about him, and he would pass these on to you when you came to see him, as he was doing to his students in class. I know from my own experience how the lightly dropped seeds from his lectures could take root and unfold in another's mind; and, in the course of writing this memoir, I have happened to find striking evidence of the persistence of this vital gift in the testimony of a student of Romance languages who sat under Gauss twenty years later, and who has told me that, in preparing a doctor's thesis, he had at first been exhilarated by an illusion of developing original ideas, only to find the whole thing in germ in his old notes on Gauss's lectures. But though his influence on his students was so penetrating, Gauss founded no school of teaching—not even, I suppose, an academic tradition—because, as one of his colleagues pointed out to me, he had no communicable body of doctrine and no pedagogical method that other teachers could learn to apply. If one went back to Princeton to see him, as I more or less regularly did, after one had got out of college, one's memory of his old preceptorials (relatively informal discussions with groups of five or six students) would seem prolonged, without interruption, into one's more recent conversations, as if it had all been a long conversation that had extended, off and on, through the years: a commentary that, on Christian's part, never seemed to be trying to prove anything in any overwhelming way, a voyage of speculation that aimed rather to survey the world than to fix a convincing vision. In his role of the least didactic of sages, the most accessible of talkers, he seemed a part of that good eighteenth-century Princeton which has always managed to flourish between the pressures of a narrow Presbyterianism and a rich man's suburbanism. It is probable that Christian was at home in Princeton as he would not have been anywhere else. He was delightful in the days of his deanship, in the solid and compact and ample yellow-and-white Joseph Henry house, built in 1837, where there was always, during the weekends, a constant going and coming of visitors, who could pick up with him any topic—literary, historical or collegiate—and pursue it till someone else came and the thread was left suspended. Though by this time so important a local figure, he seemed always, also, international. He had been born of German parents in Michigan, and German had been his first language. In his youth he had spent a good deal of time in France. He had no foreign accent in English, and, so far as I was able to judge, spoke all his languages correctly and fluently; but French, Italian and English, at any rate, with a deliberate articulation, never running the words together, as if they were not native to him. One did not learn a bad accent from him, but one did not learn to speak the Romance languages as they are spoken in their own countries. On the other hand, the very uniformity of his candid tone, his unhurried pace and his scrupulous precision, with his slightly drawling intonations, made a kind of neutral medium in which everything in the world seemed soluble. I have never known anyone like him in any academic community. He gave the impression of keeping in touch, without the slightest effort—he must have examined all the printed matter that came into the university library—with everything that was going on everywhere, as well as everything that had ever gone on. It used to amuse me sometimes to

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try him out on unlikely subjects. If one asked him a question about the Middle Ages, one absolutely got the impression that he had lived in Europe then and knew it at firsthand.

This extreme flexibility and enormous range were, of course, a feature of his lectures. He was able to explain and appreciate almost any kind of work of literature from almost any period. He would show you what the author was aiming at and the methods he had adopted to achieve his ends. He was wonderful at comparative literature, for his reading had covered the whole of the West, ancient, medieval and modern; and his memory was truly Macaulayan (an adjective sometimes assigned too cheaply). He seemed to be able to summon almost everything he wanted in prose or verse, as if he were taking down the books from the shelf. (He told me once that, in his younger days, he had set out to write something about Rabelais and had presently begun to grow suspicious of what he saw coming out. On looking up Taine's essay on Rabelais, he found that he had been transcribing whole paragraphs from it, his unconscious doing the work of translation.) He was brilliant at revealing the assumptions, social, esthetic and moral, implicit in, say, a scene from a Romantic play as contrasted with a scene from a Greek tragedy, or in the significance of a character in Dante as distinguished from the significance of a character in Shakespeare. I remember his later quoting with approval A. N. Whitehead's statement, in *Science and the Modern World*, that, "when you are criticizing the philosophy of an epoch," you should "not chiefly direct your attention to those intellectual positions which its exponents feel it necessary explicitly to defend. There will be some fundamental assumptions which adherents of all the variant systems within the epoch unconsciously presuppose. Such assumptions appear so obvious that people do not know what they are assuming because no other way of putting things has ever occurred to them." Gauss had always had a special sense of this. But he was interested also in individuals and liked to bring out the traits of a literary personality. His commentary on a poem of Victor Hugo's—"Le Mendiant" from *Les Contemplations*—would run along something like this: "A poor man is passing in the frost and rain, and Victor Hugo asks him in. He opens the door '*d'une façon civile*'—he is always democratic, of course. '*Entrez, brave homme*,' he says, and he tells the man to warm himself and has a bowl of milk brought him—as anybody, of course, would do. He makes him take off his cloak—'*tout mangé des vers, et jadis bleu*'—and he hangs it on a nail, where the fire shines through its holes, so that it looks like a night illumined by stars:

Et, pendant qu'il séchait ce haillon désolé
D'où ruisselaient la pluie et l'eau des fondrières,
Je songeais que cet homme était plein de prières.
Et je regardais, sourd à ce que nous disions,
Sa bure où je voyais des constellations.

"This sounds impressive, but what does it mean? Not a thing. We have not been told anything that would indicate that the old man is full of prayers. It is a gratuitous assumption on the part of Hugo. That the cloak with its holes reminded him of a heaven with constellations has no moral significance whatever. Yet with his mastery of verse and his rhetoric, Victor Hugo manages to carry it off. I don't mean," Christian would add, "that he was insincere. Rather than live under Louis Napoleon, he went into voluntary exile—at considerable personal inconvenience—for almost twenty years. He lived up to his democratic principles, but he was always a bit theatrical, and he was not very profound."

I include such reminiscences of the classroom in the hope that they may be of interest in putting on record Gauss's methods as a teacher; for the work of a great teacher who is not, as Gauss was not, a great writer, is almost as likely to be irrecoverable as the work of a great actor. Not that Christian was ever in the least histrionic, as some of the popular professors of the time were. On the contrary, for all the friendliness of one's relations with him outside class when one eventually got to know him, his tone was sober and quiet, his atti-

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tude detached and impersonal. This was partly due to shyness, no doubt; but the impression he made was formidable. He would come into the classroom without looking at us, and immediately begin to lecture, with his eyes dropped to his notes, presenting a mask that was almost Dantesque, and leveling on us only occasionally the clear gaze that came through his eyeglasses. When he made us recite in Dante, he would sometimes pace to and fro between the desk and the window, with his hands behind his back, rarely consulting the text, which he apparently knew by heart. In the case of some appalling error, he would turn with a stare of ironic amazement and remonstrate in a tone of mock grief: "You thought that barretry was the same as banditry? O-o-h, Mr. X, that's too-oo ba-a-ad!" This last exclamation, drawled out, was his only way of indicating disapproval. His voice was always low and even, except at those moments when he became aware that the class was falling asleep. Then he would turn on another voice—loud, nasal, declamatory and pitilessly distinct—which would be likely to begin in the middle of a sentence, for the sake of the shock value, I think, and in order to dissociate this warning from whatever he happened to be saying—which might be something no more bloodcurdling than a statement that André Chénier had brought to the classical forms a nuance of romantic feeling. When this voice would be heard in the class next door—for it penetrated the partition like a fire siren—it always made people laugh; but for the students in Gauss's own room, it seemed to saw right through the base of the spine and made them sit forward intently. When it had had this effect, it would cease. He was never sarcastic and he never bullied; but the discipline he maintained was perfect. Any signs of disorder were silenced by one straight and stern look.

Nevertheless, though Christian's methods were nondramatic, he had a knack of fixing in one's mind key passages and key facts. His handling of Rousseau, for example, was most effective in building up the importance of a writer whom we might otherwise have found boring. (In this case, he *has* left something that can be used by his successors, in his volume of *Selections* from Rousseau, published by the Princeton University Press—though, as usual with Gauss's writing, the introduction and notes have little of the peculiar effectiveness of his lecture-room presentation.) He would start off by planting, as it were, in our vision of the panorama of history, that critical moment of Rousseau's life which, since he did not include it in the *Confessions*, having already described it in the first of his letters to M. de Malesherbes, is likely to be overlooked or insufficiently emphasized (compare Saintsbury's slurring over of this incident and its consequences for western thought, in his *Encyclopedia Britannica* article): the moment, almost as momentous as that of Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus, when Jean Jacques, then thirty-seven, was walking from Paris to Vincennes, where he was going to see Diderot in prison, and happened to read the announcement that the Academy of Dijon was offering a prize for the best essay on the question, "Has the progress of the arts and sciences contributed to corrupt or to purify society?" Such an incident Gauss made memorable, invested with reverberating significance, by a series of incisive strokes that involved no embroidery or dramatics. It was, in fact, as if the glamor of legend, the grandeur of history, had evaporated and left him exposed to our passing gaze—the dusty and sunstruck Jean Jacques—the clockmaker's son of Geneva, the ill-used apprentice, the thieving lackey, the vagabond of the roads—sinking down under a tree and dazzled by the revelation that all the shames and misfortunes of his life had been the fault of the society that had bred him—that "man is naturally good and that it is only through institutions that men have become wicked." In the same way, he made us feel the pathos and the psychological importance of the moment when the sixteen-year-old apprentice, returning from a walk in the country, found for the third time the gates of Geneva locked against him, and decided that he would never go back.

Christian admired the Romantics and ex-

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pounded them with the liveliest appreciation; but the Romantic ideal in literature was not his own ideal. In spite of his imaginative gift for entering into other people's points of view, he was devoted to a certain conception of art that inevitably asserted itself and that had a tremendous influence on the students with literary interests who were exposed to Gauss's teaching. Let me try to define this ideal. Christian had first known Europe at firsthand as a foreign correspondent in the Paris of the late nineties, and he had always kept a certain loyalty to the "estheticism" of the end of the century. There was a legend that seemed almost incredible, of a young Christian Gauss with long yellow hair—in our time he was almost completely bald—who had worn a green velvet jacket;* and he would surprise you from time to time by telling you of some conversation he had had with Oscar Wilde or by describing some such Bohemian character as Bibi-La-Purée. It was rumored—though I never dared ask him about this—that he had once set out to experiment one by one with all the drugs mentioned in Baudelaire's *Les Paradis Artificiels*. He rather admired Wilde, with whom he had talked in cafés where the latter was sitting alone and running up high piles of saucers. He had given Christian copies of his books, inscribed, and Christian used to tell me, with evident respect, that Wilde in his last days had kept only three volumes: a copy of Walter Pater's *The Renaissance* that had been given him by Pater, Flaubert's *La Tentation de Saint Antoine*, and Swinburne's *Atalanta in Calydon*. And it was always Gauss's great advantage over the school of Babbitt and More that he understood the artist's morality as something that expressed itself in different terms from the churchgoer's or the citizen's morality; the fidelity to a kind of truth that is rendered by the discipline of esthetic form, as distinct from that of the professional moralist: the explicit communication of a "message." But there was nothing in his attitude of the truculent pose, the defiance of the bourgeoisie, that had been characteristic of the end of the century; and that that other professor of the Romance languages, Gauss's near-contemporary Ezra Pound, was to sustain through his whole career. How fundamental to his point of view, how much a thing to be taken for granted, this attitude had become, was shown clearly in a conversation I had with him, on some occasion when I had come back after college, when, in reply to some antinomian attitude of mine, or one that he imputed to me, he said, "But you were saying just now that you would have to rewrite something before it could be published. That implies a moral obligation." And his sense of the world and the scope of art was, of course, something very much bigger than was common among the esthetes and the symbolists.

Partly, perhaps, as a heritage from the age of Wilde, but more deeply as a logical consequence of his continental origin and culture, he showed a pronounced though discreet *parti pris* against the literature of the Anglo-Saxon countries. In our time, he carried on a continual feud—partly humorous, yet basically serious—with the canons of the English department. I remember his telling me, with sly satisfaction, about a visiting French professor, who had asked, when it was explained to him that someone was an authority on Chaucer, "*Il est intelligent tout de même?*" Certain classical English writers he patronized—in some cases, rightly, I think. Robert Browning in particular he abominated. The author of *Pippa Passes* was one of the very few writers about whom I thought his opinions intemperate. "That Philistine beef-eating Englishman," he would bait his colleagues in the English department, "not robust, as they say, but robustious, with his cacophonous slapdash writing—telling people that the good is sure to triumph! He is one of the most immoral poets, because he makes moral problems seem easy!" When I tried once to find out why Browning moved Christian to such indignation, he told me a little darkly, that he had greatly admired him in boyhood and had learned from him "a lot of bad

*I learn from Mrs. Gauss, who has shown me a photograph, that the realities behind this legend were a head of blond bushy hair and a jacket which, though green, was not velvet.

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doctrine." He said that the irregular love affairs in Browning were made to seem too jolly and simple, and insisted that the situation of the self-frustrated lovers of "The Statute and the Bust" had never been faced by Browning: if "the end in sight was a vice," the poet should not have wanted to have them get together; if he wanted them to get together, he ought not to have described their goal as a vice but, on the other hand, he ought to have foreseen a mess. Christian would give one a dismaying picture of a Browning offensively hearty, bouncing and booming in Italy, while the shades of Leopardi and Dante looked on, as Boccaccio said of the latter, "*con l'occhio disdegnoso.*" The kind of thing he especially hated was such a poem as the one, in *James Lee's Wife,* that begins, "O good gigantic smile o' the brown old earth. . . ." Of Byron—though Byron's writing was certainly more slapdash than Browning's—he had a much better opinion, because, no doubt, of Byron's fondness for the Continent as well as his freer intelligence and his experience of the ills of the world. He accepted Byron's love affairs—he had nothing of the prig or the Puritan—because Byron knew what he was doing and was not misleading about it. As for Shakespeare, though Christian was, of course, very far from the point of view of Voltaire, there was always just a suggestion of something of the kind in the background. He knew Shakespeare well and quoted him often, but Shakespeare was not one of the authors whom Christian had lived in or on; and he always made us feel that that sort of thing could never come up to literature that was polished and carefully planned, and that knew how to make its points and the meaning of the points it was making. He was certainly unfair to Shakespeare in insisting that his characters all talk the same language, whereas Dante's all express themselves differently. For Christian, the great poet was Dante, and he gradually convinced you of this in his remarkable Dante course. He made us see the objectivity of Dante and the significance of his every stroke, so that even the geographical references have a moral and emotional force: the Po that finds peace with its tributaries in the Paolo and Francesca episode; the mountain in the Ugolino canto that prevents the Pisans from seeing their neighbors of Lucca; the vividness of the scenes and the characters (he liked to point out how Farinata's arrogant poise was thrown into dramatic relief by the passionate interruption of Cavalcanti); and the tremendous intellectual power by which all sorts of men and women exhibiting all sorts of passions have been organized in an orderly vision that implies, also, a reasoned morality. No Englishman, he made us feel, could ever have achieved this; it would never have occurred to Shakespeare. Nor could any English novelist have even attempted what Gustave Flaubert had achieved—a personal conception of the world, put together, without a visible seam, from apparently impersonal descriptions, in which, as in Dante, not a stroke was wasted. He admired the Russians, also, for their sober art of implication. I remember his calling our attention to one of the church scenes in Tolstoy's *Resurrection,* in which, as he pointed out, Tolstoy made no overt comment, yet caused you to loathe the whole thing by describing the ceremony step by step. This non-English, this classical and Latin ideal, became indissolubly associated in our minds with the summits of literature. We got from Gauss a good many things, but the most important things we got were probably Flaubert and Dante. John Peale Bishop, who came to Princeton intoxicated with Swinburne and Shelley, was concentrating, by the time he graduated, on hard images and pregnant phrases. Ezra Pound and the Imagists, to be sure, had a good deal to do with this, but Gauss's courses were important, too, and such an early poem of Bishop's as "Losses," which contrasts Verlaine with Dante, was directly inspired by them. Less directly, perhaps, but no less certainly, the development of F. Scott Fitzgerald from *This Side of Paradise* to *The Great Gatsby*—from a loose and subjective conception of the novel to an organized impersonal one—was also due to Christian's influence. He made us all want to write something in which every word, every cadence, every detail, should

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perform a definite function in producing an intense effect.

Gauss's special understanding of the techniques of art was combined, as is not always the case, with a highly developed sense of history as well as a sense of morality (he admirably prepared us for Joyce and Proust). If he played down—as I shall show in a moment—the Thomist side of Dante to make us see him as a great artist, he brought out in Flaubert the moralist and the bitter critic of history. And so much, at that period, was all his thought pervaded by the *Divine Comedy* that even his own version of history had at moments a Dantesque touch. It would not have been difficult, for example, to transpose such a presentation as the one of Rousseau that I have mentioned above into the sharp, concise self-description of a character in the *Divina Commedia:* "I am the clockmaker's son of Geneva who said that man has made man perverse. When for the third time the cruel captain closed the gates, I made the road my home, and found in Annecy the love Geneva had denied . . ."

With this sense of history of Christian's was involved another strain in his nature that had nothing to do with the estheticism of the nineties, and yet lived in his mind with it quite comfortably. His father, who came from Baden—he was a relative of the physicist Karl Friedrich Gauss—had taken part in the unsuccessful German revolution of 1848 and come to the United States during the emigrations that followed it. The spirit of '48 was still alive in Christian, and at the time of the First World War, an hereditary hatred of the Prussians roused him to a passionate championship of the anti-German cause even before the United States declared war. Later on, when Prohibition was imposed on the nation, the elder Gauss, as Christian told me, was so much infuriated by what he regarded as an interference nothing short of Prussian with the rights of a free people, that he could not talk calmly about it; and, even when dean of the College and obliged to uphold the law, the American-born Christian continued in public to advocate its repeal, which required a certain courage in Presbyterian Princeton. It was this old-fashioned devotion to liberty that led him to admire Hugo for his refusal to live under the Second Empire, and Byron for his willingness to fight for Italian and Greek liberation. "Everywhere he goes in Europe," Christian would say of Byron, "it is the places, like the prison of Chillon, where men had been oppressed, that arouse him." When he lectured on Anatole France, he would point out the stimulating contrast between the early France of Sylvester Bonnard, who always wrote, as he said, like a kindly and bookish old man; and the France who defended Dreyfus, made a tour of the provinces to speak for him, and remained for the rest of his life a social satirist and a radical publicist. In the years when I was first at Princeton, Gauss called himself, I believe, a socialist; during the years of depression in the thirties, he gravitated again toward the Left, and, in *A Primer for Tomorrow* (1934), he made some serious attempt to criticize the financial-industrial system. In the inscription in the copy he sent me, he said that my stimulation had counted for something in his writing the book. But I was never able to persuade him to read Marx and Engels at firsthand: he read Werner Sombart instead; and I noted this, like the similar unwillingness of Maynard Keynes to read Marx, as a curious confirmation of the theory of the Marxists that the "bourgeois intellectuals" instinctively shy away from Marxist thought to the extent of even refusing to find out what it really is. Yet Christian had read Spengler with excitement—it was from him that I first heard of *The Decline of the West*—immediately after the war; and he never, in these later years, hesitated, in conversation, to indulge in the boldest speculations as to the destiny of contemporary society.

He was a member of the National Committee of the American Civil Liberties Union, and he made a point, after the Second World War, of speaking to Negro audiences in the South. On my last visit to Princeton when I saw him, in the Spring of 1951, he talked to me at length about his adventures in the color-discrimination states: how the representatives of some Negro or-

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ganization, under whose auspices he had been speaking, had been unable to come to see him in his white hotel; and how, as he told me with pride, he had succeeded, for the first time in the history of Richmond, in assembling—in a white church, to which, however, he found that Negroes were only admitted in the back pews—a mixed black and white audience. As he grew older, he became more internationalist. He foresaw, at the end of the First World War, and he often insisted, that nothing but trouble would come of creating more small European states; and, at the end of the Second World War, he was bitterly opposed to what he regarded as the development of American nationalism. He complained much, in this connection, of the intensive cultivation, in the colleges, of American literature—a cultivation that had been carried on, since sometime in the middle thirties, with a zeal that he thought more and more menacing to sound international values. I did not, on the whole, agree with him in disapproving of the growth of American studies; but I could see that, with his relative indifference to English literature, he must have acquired, at the end of the century, an extremely low opinion of American literature. He took no interest in Henry James and not very much in Walt Whitman. He told me once that Henry Ford had said, "Cut your own wood and it will warm you twice," not knowing that Ford had been quoting Thoreau. For Christian, the level of American writing was more or less represented by William Dean Howells, the presiding spirit of the years of his youth, for whom he felt hardly the barest respect. It was absolutely incredible to him—and in this I did agree with him—that *The Rise of Silas Lapham* should ever have been thought an important novel. "It wasn't much of a rise," he would say. Yet the "renaissance" of the twenties he followed—unlike Paul Elmer More—with sympathetic, if critical, interest.

Christian Gauss was a complex personality as well as a subtle mind, and one finds it, in some ways, difficult to sort out one's impressions of him. I want to try to deal now with the moral qualities which, combined with his unusual intellectual powers, gave him something of the stature of greatness. In some sense, he was a moral teacher as well as a literary one; but his teaching, in the same way as his criticism, was conveyed by throwing out suggestions and dropping incidental comments. In this connection, I want to quote here the tribute of Harold R. Medina, the distinguished federal judge, from the symposium in the *Alumni Weekly*. It expresses a good deal better than anything I was able to write myself, when I drafted this memoir for the first time, the penetrating quality of Gauss's power; and it is interesting to me as describing an experience that closely parallels my own on the part of an alumnus of an earlier class—1909—who was to work in a different field, yet who had known Christian Gauss, as I had, not as dean of the College but as teacher of literature.

Of all the men whom I have met [Judge Medina writes], only four have significantly influenced my life. Dean Gauss was the second of these; the first, my father. From freshman year on, I had many courses and precepts with Dean Gauss, and during my senior year I was with him almost daily. He attracted me as he did everyone else; and I sensed that he had something to impart which was of infinitely greater importance than the mere content of the courses in French literature. It was many years after I left Princeton before I realized that it was he who first taught me how to think. How strange it is that so many people have the notion that they are thinking when they are merely repeating the thoughts of others. He dealt in ideas without seeming to do so; he led and guided with so gentle a touch that one began to think almost despite oneself. The process once started, he continued in such fashion as to instill into my very soul the determination to be a seeker after truth, the elusive, perhaps never to be attained, complete and utter truth, no matter where it led or whom it hurt. How he did it, I shall never know; but that it was he, I have not the slightest doubt. His own intellectual integrity was a constant example for me to follow. And to this precious element he added another. He gave me the vision of language and literature as something repre-

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senting the continuous and never-ending flow of man's struggle to think the thoughts which, when put into action, constitute in the aggregate the advance of civilization. Whatever I may be today, or may ever hope to be, is largely the result of the germination of the seeds he planted. The phenomena of cause and effect are not to be denied. With Dean Gauss there were so many hundreds of persons, like myself, whom he influenced and whose innate talents he developed, that the ripples he started in motion were multiplied again and again. In critical times, I always wondered whether he approved or would approve of things I said and did. And this went on for over forty years.

"To instill in my very soul the determination to be a seeker after truth . . . no matter where it led or whom it hurt." I remember my own thrilled response when, in taking us through the seventeenth canto of the *Paradiso*, Christian read without special emphasis, yet in a way that brought out their conviction, a tercet that remained from that moment engraved, as they say, on my mind:

E s'io al vero son timido amico,
Temo di perder viver tra coloro
Che questo tempo chiameranno antico.

—"If to the truth I prove a timid friend, I fear to lose my life [to fail of survival] among those who will call this time ancient." The truth to which Dante refers is his opinion of certain powerful persons, who will, as he has just been forewarned in Heaven, retaliate by sending him into exile—a truth which, as Heaven approves, he will not be deterred from uttering.

Another moment in the classroom comes back to me from one of Christian's preceptorials. He had put to us the issue created by the self-assertive type of romantic, who followed his own impulse in defiance of conventional morality and with indifference to social consequences; and he called upon me to supply him with an instance of moral conflict between social or personal duty and the duty of self-realization. I gave him the case of a problem with which I had had lately to deal as editor of the *Nassau Lit*, when I had not been able to bring myself to tell a friend who had set his heart upon contributing, that the manuscripts he brought me were hopeless. "That's not an impulse," said Christian, "to do a human thing; it's a temptation to do a weak thing."

I was struck also by what seemed to me the unusual line that he took one day in class when one of his students complained that he hadn't been able to find out the meaning of a word. "What did you call it?" asked Christian. "Didn't you call it something?" The boy confessed that he hadn't. "That's bad intellectual form," said Christian. "Like going out in the morning with your face unwashed. In reading a foreign language, you must never leave a gap or a blur. If you can't find out what something means, make the best supposition you can. If it's wrong, the chances are that the context will show it in a moment or that you'll see, when the word occurs again, that it couldn't have meant that." This made such an impression on me that—just as Judge Medina says he has been asking himself all his life whether Christian Gauss would approve of his conduct—I still make an effort to live up to it.

I love to remember, too, how Christian began one of his lectures as follows: "There are several fundamental philosophies that one can bring to one's life in the world—or rather, there are several ways of taking life. One of these ways of taking the world is not to have any philosophy at all—that is the way that most people take it. Another way is to regard the world as unreal and God as the only reality: Buddhism is an example of this point of view. Another may be summed up in the words *Sic transit gloria mundi*—that is the point of view you find in Shakespeare." He then went on to an explanation of the eighteenth-century philosophy which assumed that the world was real and that we ourselves may find some sense in it and make ourselves happy in it. On another occasion, in preceptorial, Christian asked me, "Where do you think our ideals come from—justice, righteousness, beauty and so on?" I replied, "Out of the imaginations of men"; and he surprised me by answering, "That is correct." This made an impression on me, because he usually confined himself to purely Socratic

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questioning, in which he did not often allow himself to express his own opinions. I felt that I had caught him off guard: what he had evidently been expecting to elicit had been either Platonic idealism or Christian revelation.

It was only outside class, and at second-hand, that I learned that he said of himself at this time that his only religion was Dante; yet it could not escape us, in the long run, that the Dante we were studying was a secular Dante—or rather, perhaps, a Dante of the Reformation—the validity of whose art and morality did not in the least depend on one's acceptance or non-acceptance of the faith of the Catholic church. Christian would remind us from time to time of Dante's statement, in his letter to Can Grande, that his poem, though it purported to describe a journey to the other world, really dealt with man's life in this; and we were shown that the conditions of the souls in Hell, Purgatory and Heaven were metaphors for our moral situation here. The principle of salvation that we learned from Dante was not the Catholic surrender to Jesus—who plays in the *Divine Comedy* so significantly small a role—but the vigilant cultivation of "*il ben del intelletto*."

Some of those who had known Christian in his great days as a teacher were sorry, after the war, to see him becoming involved in the administrative side of the University. I remember his saying to me one day, in the early stages of this, "I've just sent off a lot of letters, and I said to myself as I mailed them, 'There are seventeen letters, to people who don't interest me in the least.'" But the job of the Dean's office did interest him—though it seemed to us that it did not take a Gauss to rule on remiss or refractory students. He had never liked repeating routine, and I suppose that his department was coming to bore him. He made, by all accounts, a remarkable dean—for his card-catalogue memory kept all names and faces on file, even for decades after the students had left; and the sensitive feeling for character that had been hidden behind his classroom mask must have equipped him with a special tact in dealing with the difficult cases. His genius for moral values had also a new field now in which it could exercise itself in an immediate and practical way, and the responsibilities of his office—especially in the years just after the war, when students were committing suicide and getting into all sorts of messes—sometimes put upon him an obvious strain. Looking back, since his death, it has seemed to me that the Gauss who was dean of Princeton must have differed almost as much from the Gauss with whom I read French and Italian, as this austere teacher had from the young correspondent in Paris who had paid for Oscar Wilde's drinks. The Gauss I had known in my student days, with his pale cheeks and shuttered gaze, his old raincoat and soft flat hat, and a shabby mongrel dog named Baudelaire which had been left with him by the Jesse Lynch Williamses and which sometimes accompanied him into class—the Gauss who would pass you on the campus without speaking, unless you attracted his attention, in an abstraction like that of Dante in Hell, and who seemed to meet the academic world with a slightly constrained self-consciousness at not having much in common with it—this figure warmed up and filled out, became recognizably Princetonian in his neckties and shirts and a touch of that tone that combines a country club self-assurance with a boyish country-town homeliness. He now met the college world, unscreened, with his humorous and lucid green eyes. He wore golf stockings and even played golf. He interested himself in the football team and made speeches at alumni banquets. Though I know that his influence as dean was exerted in favor of scholarships, higher admission requirements and the salvaging of the Humanities—I cannot do justice here to this whole important phase of his career—the only moments of our long friendship when I was ever at all out of sympathy with him occurred during these years of officialdom, for I felt that he had picked up, a little, the conventional local prejudices when I found him protesting against the advent in Princeton of the Institute for Advanced Study or, on one occasion, censoring the *Lit* for publishing a "blasphemous" story. One was always impressed, however, by

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the comprehensive and lucid way in which he seemed to have absorbed the business of the University.

We used to hope that he would eventually be president; but, with the domination of business interests on the boards of trustees of the larger American colleges, it was almost as unlikely that Christian would have been asked to be president of Princeton, as it would have been that Santayana would have been asked to be president of Harvard. Not, of course, that it would ever have occurred to anyone to propose such a post for Santayana, but it was somehow characteristic of Christian's career that the idea should have entered the minds of his friends, and that nothing should ever have come of it. There appeared in the whole line of Christian's life a certain diversion of purpose, an unpredictable ambiguity of aim, that corresponded to the fluid indeterminate element in his teaching and conversation. He had originally been a newspaper correspondent and a writer of reviews for literary journals, who hoped to become a poet. He was later a college professor who had developed into a brilliant critic—by far the best, so far as I know, in our academic world of that period—and who still looked forward to writing books; I once found him, in one of his rare moments of leisure, beginning a historical novel. Then, as dean, in the late twenties and thirties, he came to occupy a position of intercollegiate distinction rather incongruous with that usually prosaic office. Was he a "power" in American education? I do not believe he was. That kind of role is possible only for a theorist like John Dewey or an administrator like Charles W. Eliot. Though he was offered the presidency of another college, he continued at Princeton as dean, and simply awaited the age of retirement. When that came, he seemed at first depressed, but later readjusted himself.

I enjoyed him in these post-official years. He was no longer overworked, and he no longer had to worry about the alumni. He returned to literature and started an autobiography, with which, however, he said he was dissatisfied. In October of 1951, he wrote an introduction for a new edition of Machiavelli's *Prince*, and was pleased with it when he had finished. He took Mrs. Gauss for a drive in the car, and they talked about a trip to Florida. He had seemed in good spirits and health, though he had complained the Saturday before, after going to the Cornell game, when he had climbed to one of the top tiers of seats, that he was feeling the effects of age—he was now seventy-three. The day after finishing his introduction, he took the manuscript to his publisher in New York and attended there a memorial service for the Austrian novelist, Hermann Broch, whom he had known when the latter had lived in Princeton. While waiting outside the gates for the train to take him back to Princeton, with the evening paper in his pocket, his heart failed and he suddenly fell dead.

One had always still expected something further from Christian, had hoped that his character and talents would arrive at some final fruition. But—what seems to one still incredible—one's long conversation with him was simply forever suspended. And one sees, now, that the career was complete, the achievement is all there. He has left no solid body of writing; he did not remake Princeton (as Woodrow Wilson in some sense was able to do); he was not really a public man. He was a spiritual and intellectual force—one does not know how else to put it—in a way that a man who does any of those other things may never achieve. His great work in his generation was unorganized and unobtrusive; and *Who's Who* will tell you nothing about it; but his influence was vital for those who felt it.

Chè in la mente m'è fitta, ed or m'accora,
La cara e buona imagine paterna
Di voi, quando nel mondo ad ora ad ora
M'insegnavate come l'uom s'eterna. . . .

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THE SOCIAL SCIENTISTS REPLY

At least a dozen practicing social scientists were invited to participate in the Spring, 1952, AMERICAN SCHOLAR FORUM, *"Scientific Method and Human Behavior." Since they could not be present at the time of the discussion, the* SCHOLAR *invited them to comment on the discussion held. The three comments received are printed here.*—EDITOR.

An Horrific Caricature

ROBERT K. MERTON

As many of us can testify, there are few experiences more chastening than that of being forced to read a verbatim account of an extemporaneous discussion in which one has taken an active part. It is not merely that our awkward sentences dismay us, although they well might. Nor is it only the ambiguous phrases, the seeming denial of elementary rules of logic, the discontinuities of thought (as each successive sentence darts off in some new direction for a very short distance) that ordinarily prove embarrassing. These are, after all, minor and superficial blemishes, easily removed by later editing. Second thought usually allows us to delete those things we wish had not been said—those occasional mistakes of fact, judgment and inference that perversely manage to creep into impromptu discussions of this sort.

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We can suppose, therefore, that your symposiasts, like the rest of us in comparable situations, will want to edit and correct, to prune here and to expand there, the verbatim transcript of the discussion which I have before me. They will undoubtedly want to straighten out the little self-contradictions which turned up in the give-and-take of discussion. Mr. Krutch, for example, will not want to find himself saying, in one place, that "the" social scientists are, at best, poor imitations of real scientists because, as everybody knows, they cannot predict human behavior; and to find himself reporting, in another place, his profound fear of the social scientists who control the social world in which we live by means of their knowledge of men's behavior. Mr. Skinner, again, will probably not want to remain "unhappy" about statistically established uniformities of group behavior, as though such "uniformities" could be expressed in any but statistical terms.

There is, perhaps, a more worrisome defect of this discussion, not so easily excised or patched up by editorial revision,

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that may disturb the participants as they read, with some dismay and occasional astonishment, the exact transcription of what they said in the course of an excessively stimulating discussion. It will become apparent to them, as it will to other readers, that nowhere in this conversation about "social scientists" do they satisfactorily decide for themselves just what they mean by the term "social scientists." Throughout this lengthy discussion, they will find, there are precisely two passing references, casual and undeveloped, to contemporary research in social science: one to Ruth Benedict's *Patterns of Culture*, and the other, to an undesignated book by Ashley Montagu. They will probably be startled to find, instead, that their conversation was studded with allusions to engineers and girders, unpredictable love affairs and predictable contraceptives, and with references to Plato, Shakespeare, Darwin and Marx; to Hume, Locke and Hegel; and to the worlds of Aldous Huxley, Nietzsche and Samuel Butler. Apart from these scattered allusions, which share the double characteristic of being neither about social science nor about contemporary social research, the participants refer, by name, to two social scientists whom they had wisely wanted to participate in the discussion. The revised text* will clearly benefit by removing the erroneous impression that they do not know, at firsthand, the researches of any other contemporary social scientist—an impression unavoidably left with the reader of the verbatim account. This would appear all the more desirable since the symposiasts, who complain about the thin, floating abstractions of sociologists, will not welcome the thought that they condemn in others what they find in themselves.

After these needed revisions are made, some statements in the original transcript will undoubtedly remain intact. Among these is the repeated affirmation by Mr. Kroeber, the acknowledged dean of American anthropologists, that he is not a social scientist, but a humanist. The reader of the great Kroeber treatise on anthropology will discount this as excessive modesty, so characteristic of this most admired of contemporary social scientists, and will continue to profit from his numerous contributions to social science. If, at first, it seems a little unfair of Mr. Kroeber thus to lead his associates in the symposium up the garden path, it must be remembered that they are, beyond dispute, distinguished men of learning—in literature and the arts, in history and particularly in the history of ideas, and in psychology. What is more, in describing himself as "the devil's advocate" of the social scientists, Mr. Kroeber gave his associates fair warning of the path they were treading. For, as the ever-perceptive Fowler reminds us, "far from being the whitewasher of the wicked, the devil's advocate is the blackener of the good." And, we might add, the devil's-advocate-with-tongue-in-check is truly a case of undoing an imaginary evil by making it plain, to all who would look, that it does not exist. He can scarcely be blamed for misdirecting his associates, if they take part in a conversation about social science and yet do not know that with them sits one of the most eminent social scientists of our time, simply because he has disclaimed that honorific title. He was, perhaps, only seeking to remove any occasion for excessive caution on the part of his associates, and in this, as the record shows, he was entirely successful.

When the symposiasts have corrected these and other flaws of the kind that characteristically mar an impromptu discussion, what remains of the argument? The short passages that are likely to survive these minor self-corrections can be quickly summarized.

First, the allegation, repeated on a half-dozen or so occasions, that social scientists, unidentified and undescribed, are primarily motivated in their work by wanting "to change a great variety of things," that they are moved by "utilitarian" ends, that they want to remake the world in accord with their own tacit values. Now, if this claim

* It is an established part of the procedure of these Forum discussions that the participants are not allowed to revise the text, and that the Editor does so only to clarify sentence structure, etc.—EDITOR.

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were sufficiently tidied up to allow one to know what it affirms, it might be possible to find out whether or not it is true. Does it mean that most social scientists presently engaged in social research are in fact so motivated? Or does it mean that this was once the case, long before disciplined social research had fairly begun? Presumably the latter. For in one of the rare moments when a specific case in point is cited, Mr. Brinton quickly covers the period "from Plato down through Marx" as ground for the conclusion. Centuries may loom small in the chronology of a professor of both ancient and modern history, yet Mr. Brinton does seem to stretch his point a bit too far when he cites the ancient philosopher or the nineteenth century revolutionary as evidence of the current motivation of contemporary social scientists. Perhaps what is needed is a social science inquiry into this hypothesis about the motivations of living social scientists.

Secondly, another part that may survive is the discussion of the possibility of predicting the behavior of individuals and groups—a discussion which might have been carried on, almost without change, a century or more ago—again before there was any substantial research in social science. The notion that the social scientist must either be able to predict the behavior of every individual in all its infinite detail, or confess to total ignorance, is one of those commonplace errors which even Quetelet, a century or so ago, thought he had laid to well-deserved rest. But he was plainly wrong. For here it is again, disinterred rather than resurrected, and without benefit of specific reference to the numerous researches in social psychology and sociology (by Stouffer, Lazarsfeld, Bruner, Piaget, Hull, Lewin, Allison Davis—to mention, necessarily, only a few) which have shown the distinctive place of statistical predictions in current social science.

Thirdly, as has been intimated, it is affirmed in one breath, during this symposium, that social scientists cannot predict because they do not understand human behavior, and, in the next breath, that social scientists are truly dangerous creatures because they provide the knowledge of human behavior which enables men to be manipulated and managed for bad or stupid ends. Yet it would seem that knowledge will not provide this evil power unless it be true. (To choose one of the symposiasts' favorite analogies: evil intent is not enough to build an atom bomb; sound knowledge is also required.) If social science is unsound, it cannot be used to manage behavior, and if it is being used to manage behavior, it must, to that extent, be sound knowledge. Even Mr. Krutch cannot have it both ways.

There are other similarly instructive opinions expressed in this symposium which deserve attention, but the space allotted me for comment has almost run out. We should, however, note in passing Mr. Krutch's assertion that "what the social scientist always tries to do" is to find out what people want, and "then [give] it to them." Out of kindness, no doubt, he fails to identify the "kind of social scientist" who discovers that people, "as a whole," prefer less, rather than more, classical music in radio programs, and then proceeds to "give them" even less classical music. Yet had he been less indulgent and more explicit, it would have been possible for the reader to consult the few social science studies of this very point and to learn for himself that they are, instead, characteristically focused on the *sources* of these preferences, and on the circumstances which have led some people to prefer classical music.

All in all, the symposium has yielded one conclusion about contemporary social science which seems, on the evidence, to remain unimpeachable. This is the conclusion that Mr. Krutch, and Mr. Brinton, and perhaps Mr. Skinner—we really must exempt the tongue-in-check social scientist, Mr. Kroeber—simply do not *like* the social scientists. And at this we cannot wonder, after seeing the horrific caricature of "the" social scientist with which they live.

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Social Science: Illusion and Reality

CHESTER I. BARNARD

Unable to accept the invitation to participate in the give-and-take of this extemporaneous and largely spontaneous discussion, I yield to Editor Haydn's request for what I would call an armchair critique of it, based upon readings of the uncorrected galley proof.

It is rather curious that for the discussion of this subject there should have been present no alleged social scientists. The psychologist Skinner evidently was taken to be a natural scientist. The anthropologist Kroeber eschewed the role of social scientist, but I am not sure whether he was diffident because he did not wish to call himself a scientist, or because he did not wish to be classified with the species "social." Mr. Brinton, the historian, seemed to have one foot in the social scientist lowlands and the other on the ethereal heights of those pure and undefiled values called humanistic.

It seems to be usual in discussions of this kind that the terms are rarely defined with care; hence, a good deal of the discussion is concerned with clearing away semantic confusions. Some terms, like "science" and "scientific methods," which everyone uses, have no commonly accepted definitions. In the large amount of literature on these subjects, it is evident that these words mean many different things to different people, or are employed in somewhat different senses, even by the same person, in different contexts.

In this Forum it is difficult, if not impossible, to obtain a very close idea of the sense in which the participants thought the word "science" could be appropriately used in application to the social field. It seems to me that there was little discussion of the subject of the symposium, namely, "Scientific Method and Human Behavior." The discussion, rather, ran off in the direction of abusing the social scientists and of emphasizing the futility and even the danger of their existence.

I noticed, first, the conception of science as that which permits accurate predictions. This idea is very commonly expressed, particularly by social scientists; but it seems to me to be a quite inadequate view, not only because a great deal of what should properly be called descriptive is known as scientific, but for another reason also: that at least some scientists regard prediction as the beginning and not the end of science. Recently, I overheard a distinguished scientist, a Nobel laureate, make this remark, whereupon an eminent medical scientist immediately corroborated the statement. At any rate, when the predictive capacity of engineers is made the standard of reference, which Mr. Brinton did at one point in the discussion, I wonder if anyone present recognized, as I am sure one who has had experience with engineers would, that engineers, like bankers, are so modest about their predictive capacities that they are always seeking to put in those sometimes costly weasels—"factors of safety."

It seems to me that, if the topic had been adequately discussed, it would have been necessary to consider the wide variations among scientists with regard to the rigor of reasoning acceptable, the nature of the criteria regarded as useful to ascertain validity or to discover error, and the appropriate degree of quantitative accuracy where this is called for. Although scientists like, I think, to proclaim, at least in principle, an as yet undemonstrated unity of science, the reading of scientific literature and discussions among scientists of all kinds would suggest variations so great in the actual research procedures in different fields that these fields would have to be considered as different species, if not classes, of science.

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Throughout the discussion, there seems to me to have been, also, a very important confusion between science and the motivation of scientific effort. The idea seemed to be that "real" science or "pure" science is that which is done, not for practical or mercenary reasons, but for humanistic reasons: i.e., that curiosity, love of research, and interest in the results of research comprise the only direct values that result from true science. This does not seem to conform to the history of science, and it involves the assumption that scientific results must be inadequate if any but "pure" motives are involved. I think those present must have forgotten Pasteur and many others, whose principal contributions to science arose from their efforts to solve eminently practical problems.

Apparently the "impurity" of the social scientists makes them appear to be a class of men who want to tamper with things, to tell other people what to do, and to talk about values without any interest in or appreciation of them. This slanderous treatment of the social scientists, granting that it is not far from the truth with respect to some of them, seems to me to be essentially erroneous. I have known a great many social scientists, some of them quite intimately. A few of them have worked from the point of view of the reformer; most of them have had, I think, grave doubts about the organizational possibility of managing society—to say nothing of managing the world—and most of them, in fact, have had motives analogous to those of other classes of scientists: curiosity about human and social behavior, and a desire to secure dependable knowledge of it by methods that allow as little as possible the intrusion of their personal predilections.

Social Science vs. Social Values

CONRAD M. ARENSBERG

Your letter and galleys came across the Atlantic with me. In getting away to Europe for a sabbatical half-year, I had no time even to read them before I flew to Paris early in February. I have just read them now in a hotel room here.

Nearly all the points I would want to have made are to be found in the statements of one or the other of your speakers. I would have been a bad social science advocate, at least in defense of the reformer-social scientist set up for demolishment. In the first place, my point of view is very much Professor Skinner's. I'm all for natural science, and believe social science differs from it only in its subject matter. It is true that, most humbly put, all the scientists and humanists together are merely historians, hoping that the future will repeat the history they have seen. It is also true that most artists and novelists and other humanists have been better observers than many current social scientists in practice are. But I believe that even the social sciences will advance only insofar as they develop common and exchangeable techniques ("operations") for identifying relevant comparisons of case with case. A clinician is, indeed, not a scientist only—just as medicine is still an "art." Science enters only when abstract generalization from and of experience ("history") is achieved. Nor is a statistician or a reformer a social or any other kind of scientist so long as he only reforms or uses statistical counting devices, any more than a laboratory technician is a scientist when he is skilled in preparing a culture for bacteria, or an engineer is, when he accepts a commission to bridge a gorge with a suspension floor.

Thus I'm not afraid of the reformers, as

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is Dr. Krutch or even Dr. Kroeber. I can resist them. I don't think them any less crass in their blind attempts to foist their own values upon others than were the priests or the kings of earlier ages. Take the Bach-Offenbach controversy in these galleys. I agree with Dr. Skinner that (1) Bach is *objectively* "higher," since he's reached after Offenbach; (2) there is good evidence that more people learn to appreciate better music when they hear *both* frequently. I deplore two tendencies which are themselves based upon the tendency of the possessors of some values to push other people about, as do some of the more jejune and unsophisticated of present-day social scientists: (1) The finicky aristocratic values of too many humanists, implicit in the notion that, since Bach is higher, Offenbach should not also be played—and in this way, the low-brow and idle should be pushed to the appreciation of higher things. The world is big enough for both high art and low comedy, I think. I'd be unhappy in a world that had only one of these. (2) The equally crass, but differently class-based notion that, because one finds that an audience wants more low-brow stuff, one ought to give them more. This is good democratic and commercial practice, certainly, and is based on values just as timely as is the choice of Bach. But it also repudiates the values of specialization and differentiation, and is a coercion of both majority and minority.

For me, the "values" problem is an artificial one. There are as many personal, class, ethnic, religious, etc., values as there are kinds, conditions, organizations and roles of and for men. "Values" are of interest to the social scientist: (1) because he must explain their creation through the experience—cultural and social—of mankind; (2) because the more of them there are, the more diverse, intricate and complex is the organization of men in society which these values represent; (3) because they show clashes and discrepancies which, as a man of peace and good will (two more values, his own, if he has them), the social scientist may be called on to mediate—a constant source of employment, and better than reform, I assure you; and (4) because, on his days off, when he is not a scientist, he can rely on the traditional or the philosophical personal values he possesses, with the fully documented knowledge that he too is fully human. He needs these periods of ease, because to be *homo speculans,* as a scientist, is a wearisome if exciting job. Finally, if the social scientist is a sophisticate and not a jejune reformer, he is also a humanist in the best sense. All men and all values are his subject, and he knows, as Professor Skinner seems to, that the secret of life (either biological or psychological) is neither mere survival nor mere differentiation, but both. Therefore, he neither fears nor forces changes, as Mr. Krutch accuses him of doing (forcing, anyway), for he has learned to watch, without pushing, the "wheel of life" that rolls beside him.

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. . . . . The Reader Replies . . . . . .

THE READER REPLIES *regularly carries miscellaneous comments by readers on various articles which have appeared in the magazine. All communications should be addressed to: The Editor,* THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, *Phi Beta Kappa Hall, Williamsburg, Va., and should not exceed 300 words in length except on request. Because of limitations of space, the Editors cannot guarantee to print all letters received. Letters intended for publication in the Autumn number should be mailed before July 15.*

—EDITOR.

The Spring Forum

In your Spring number, hard upon Dr. Bestor's excellent article on the spirit of intellectual discipline, comes the FORUM, which does not even carry the ghost of a discipline—certainly not the ghost of the discipline of science or the scientific method.

My objection is indeed couched in a generality; the reason resides in the fact that the FORUM in that issue consists of generalities and, I fear, banalities. The scientific method as a philosophy is the experimental, rather than the deductive method. Though it is true that people are not readily available for use as experimental material, there is an outstanding fact regarding the scientific method which sets it apart from other philosophies or from the other logical positivists: it is the design of the experiment, or in other words, an effort at a determination of how a quality may be assayed. The FORUM discussion has violated almost every rule in the book. And one is well aware that rules should be flexible enough to fit an objective, and one may deny the applicability of rules; but one cannot ignore their existence. Indeed, one is not obliged to recognize rules, but then, one is obliged to term or title a discussion other than an "Application of Scientific Method . . ." in a case where the scientific method was neither recognized nor applied.

Nonetheless, one does write the editor when one finds a particularly objectionable feature, but one is remiss in giving him personal thanks for his judgment and courage in a publication as a whole when such a publication is deserving of thanks. By and large, THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR is a quarterly feast. It is perhaps for that reason that my threshold of tolerance of a mediocre offering is rather low.

ERWIN DI CYAN
12 East 41st Street
New York, New York

Policy for Deferment

Congratulations on "Liberal Education and a Liberal Nation" in the Spring SCHOLAR. Mr. Bestor says well a number of things that need to be said frequently.

He is fundamentally correct when he says the basic purpose of the draft deferments for college students is constructive. Nevertheless, the policy has other effects he seems to ignore. By creating a class distinction between those who can afford to attend college and those who cannot, it tends to reinforce the prejudices of the people who, as Mr. Bestor himself says, "resent the university-trained man."

It is possible that a policy something like the following might seem fairer to the majority: The college draft deferments might be confined to a smaller number by limiting them to a proportion of each class —the top fifth, perhaps—and the national

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examinations could be made even harder. In addition, equitable examinations could be made available to men of both pre-college and college age who, for one reason or another, cannot attend college. Then the government could institute a national scholarship system to insure that the men proved by the examinations to be worthy of higher education would receive it.

One of the most obvious precedents for this policy is the GI Bill of Rights. The suggested plan would also help alleviate some of the financial difficulties of our universities. Public opinion in general would be much more favorable, both to university training and to the draft, if such a policy were adopted.

This, however, was my only point of disagreement with Mr. Bestor. His article, as a whole, admirably describes and defines the ideal liberal education. If such an education can be helped by a positive democratic policy, it will not be affected by the concurrent educational perversions Mr. Bestor describes.

Mrs. Charles B. Forcey, Jr.
1221 West Dayton Street
Madison 5, Wisconsin

Faith, Reason and Freud

In the article, "Faith, Reason and Art" (Spring, 1952), Joseph Katz has himself demonstrated how one may go astray within the scope of an extended effort to warn against deviations. He has taken on faith an illustration which is fraught with widespread misunderstanding. "Most people are by now convinced," he writes, "of the Freudian aspects of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*."

The fact is that the so-called Freudian aspects of *Hamlet*, and Freud himself, are undergoing serious challenges. I have myself shown the fallacies in his Oedipus theory, based on omissions in the myth (*Psychiatry Magazine*, August, 1948). And lately, Professor Laurence Babb of Michigan State College has published *The Elizabethan Malady*, in which he points out that all of the melancholic traits of Hamlet were "traditional and commonplace." This will be a bit disturbing to most people who now credit Shakespeare—great as he was—with more insight than the facts warrant. It is one of the illusions which Freud, in good "faith," perpetrated, that incest is a primary phenomenon or wish. It is true that "most people" now rather vaguely agree with Freud, but that does not offer a scientific or philosophic basis for sound deduction.

My principal criticism of philosophers discussing reason and faith is that so often the right hand does not know what the left hand is doing.

A. J. Levin
Mill Corner
Franklin, Michigan

A Writer Replies

In your latest issue, Mr. Lee S. Hultzén, Director of the Speech Laboratory at the University of Illinois, puts me in my place as regards English usage. He makes it clear that "as a scholar" he wields authority; I as "a writer" cannot be allowed to influence usage by arguments but only through "writings"—and provided I "do it quietly."

The question of language, which I have no wish to reopen here, seems to me dwarfed by the significance of this resolute bit of police work: linguists have stood nonsense from the likes of me long enough; they will stand it only from the truly illiterate. Fellow writers please note.

Jacques Barzun
Columbia University
New York, New York

From a Not Disinterested Bystander

Jacques Barzun is perfectly able to speak for himself, but modesty or desire not to prolong a controversy may lead him to decline a reply to Mr. Hultzén (The American Scholar, Spring, 1952, pp. 248-250). On his behalf, therefore, may I thank Mr. Hultzén for graciously giving Barzun permission to distinguish in his essays between *uninterested* and *disinterested*. No

(Continued on page 382)

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..... *Under Whatever Sky* .....

IRWIN EDMAN

Flash!

The death of a king, the start of a war—these are flashed around the world to startle millions at the same instant. No, not quite the same instant. The news is broken in January, say, to those stifling with the heat in the height of the Brazilian summer and to those in a snug cabin in the Canadian Rockies by a fire crackling in competition with their radio. The same moment may be early morning in the Sierras and dusk in Brittany. Thus identical instants are not identical, quite. And in any case, even in these days of instantaneous communication, news is not as universally immediate in its transmission as is supposed. Everyone recalls some world-shaking event that did not shake *him* at the time for the simple reason that he had not heard about it until hours after everyone else in the world seemed to have done so.

Thus I recall, or seem to recall—for it seems quite incredible—that the whole of the planet knew about Pearl Harbor a whole four hours before I did. It was a long silent Sunday afternoon in winter in New York. I had briefly turned on the radio to hear what the Philharmonic was going to play: Brahms's First Symphony. Old hat! I turned it off. What work so engaged me that afternoon I cannot remember, or what play that absorbed me so completely as to forget the world. Hours later, a friend telephoned. He talked a moment or two and then he said firmly, "It's clear you haven't heard the news." He told it to me. It was the first I had heard of Pearl Harbor.

One feels a curious sense of embarrassment at finding out about events of historic significance that have for hours been familiar to everybody else. It is as if one had displayed inattention on a cosmic scale, and had been quietly dozing and only half listening when the Last Judgment had been announced. One feels one ought to catch up and be at one with one's fellows, that one ought to have been centered, like them, on the common catastrophe.

There is, of course, less world-shaking news in the world that, for varying private reasons, reaches us belatedly. We have been away: on a ranch, in Europe, in South America. Suddenly, quietly, quite by the way, we learn that someone we greatly admired has died, or altered his career fantastically; a scholar, say, become an administrator, the perennial bachelor married, the devoted couple divorced. One feels guilty at not having known it sooner, and oddly disoriented. The map of one's private world must belatedly be redrawn.

Meanwhile, it is comforting—or disturbing—to reflect that important things are happening all over the world that will reach most of those now living very late, if at all. Somewhere, doubtless, a genius was born yesterday, and—who knows—perhaps an evil genius. And, somewhere else, an intuition has come to a scientist too cautious to publish it, that may be the cure of cancer or the cure of war. And right around us, perhaps, are neglected masterpieces that posterity will wonder that we had scarcely heard of. The next generation may well speculate where on earth all of us in this generation had *been* all this time, or what on earth we *had* been paying attention to. The Battle of Jena seems to have been raging right outside his doorstep before Hegel heard of it. There are many Hegels, in this respect at least, among us. The battle Hegel didn't hear was at least noisy. But there are battles silently going on in the world which may take years to be heard.

C'Est Tout à Fait Normale

The expression is doubtless the merest cliché in France, but I never hear it without

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pleasure. One thanks a Frenchman for some special pains he has taken, some unusual trouble he has gone to. "*Je vous remercie infiniment*," one says in the idiom of polite exaggeration so common in that still courtly language. The reply is likely to be that paragon of understatement, "*C'est tout à fait normale!*" As if excessive kindness, gratuitous effort, were a banality; as if helpfulness beyond the call of duty or courtesy were the most ordinary thing in the world.

It is the usual thing to avoid the commonplace. But how agreeable it would be, really, if kindliness were routine, good nature merely standard practice; if unnecessary sweetness, uncalled-for solicitude, were "*tout à fait normale*." Then might a saint with truth, as well as modesty, say, when his selflessness had been commented upon, that it was nothing at all; a hero, that his spectacular gallantry was hardly to be mentioned. Then might a dedicated spirit, after a lifelong sacrificial devotion to a cause or an idea, say that it was so regular a thing in the world that it hardly deserved to be noticed.

Of course, things haven't come to that by a good deal. Concerning the practice of even the lesser decent little virtues, "*C'est tout à fait normale*" remains a remarkable understatement. Not genius nor courage nor saintliness have become the commonplaces that politeness might some day dare to pretend that they are. But kindliness is sufficiently widespread, helpfulness is at least frequent enough, so that a subtle form of good manners can speak as if they were quite routine. How pleasant a civilization in which infinite thanks are expressed for solicitude that is merely usual, great efforts made that are quite casual, the "least of things," nothing, really, at all.

Residues

It is, perhaps, time for a variation on the lists of ten books to take to a desert island or even of "ten books that have influenced me most." The books that have influenced us most? But how? By their grand themes, by their revealing vistas? Very often it is nothing of the kind that remains in memory or in power. Often it is some incidental passage, like the casual remarks one recalls years later of a teacher who was world famous for some sovereign ideas that one can no longer even recall. Of all the original insights in William James's two volume *Psychology*, for instance, there is much I remember. But I can never think of the book without recalling one paragraph, and I think of that paragraph almost every cold winter morning. James remarks, by way of illustration, in the chapter—was it on "Will"?—how on a cold winter morning one lingers and lingers and cannot decide to get up. Then suddenly one does get up or suddenly finds oneself out of bed. Something happens that is the deciding factor, and I could never, for the life of me, recollect what it was. When I looked it up, I found that James didn't know what the explanation was, either. In any case, it is the image, not the theory, that stays.

As in books, so in life. After four years in Germany, Henry Adams reflected upon what he had learned there and decided that he *had* learned something: "Beethoven by accident in a German beer garden." What remains of fortunate encounters with eminent men? Some small observation on some minute topic, a gesture, an intonation. What endures of a carefully programmed visit to some shrine of the classic past? Something precious, very often, but of a different order of preciousness than one had anticipated—the pathos of some living face rather than the pathos of distance or of time in a marble ruin. Or, often, as everyone in academic life knows, some remark at an international congress made in a corridor, some acquaintance renewed over a cocktail, outweighs a dozen learned communications.

It is this primacy of the uncalculated, this perdurance of the unexpected, that makes it discouraging to plan one's life, or doubtless makes one reconciled to not planning it at all. For one cannot arrange for the improvised, the unintended, the by-product. It is of no use getting ready for the lightning to flash, for the thunder to strike, or, as in Newton's case, for the apple to fall. Or is it? Apples have fallen on less ade-

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quately prepared heads than Newton's, and with far less striking results.

Valuta

It was a humiliation to land in the Swedish airport and to find that one was—or would have been, save for the cosmopolitanism of the Scandinavians—as helpless as a child. As I changed French for Swedish money, I reflected that it would be an extraordinary convenience if one were able to exchange languages, too, and buy enough of the linguistic coin current in a given country to serve one's needs while one was there.

But does a foreign language ever quite serve one's needs? "I can never be quite serious in an alien tongue," wrote a friend who is master of several languages not his own. The exotic idiom, even if one uses it fairly well, remains exotic, and, in all sorts of ways, one feels one is speaking, as it were, in fancy dress. That is partly the pleasure of it, doubtless, and it explains why one permits oneself outbursts of rhetoric, forays of emotion and fancy, that one would not dare to indulge in one's native speech. Occasionally, too, at some little crisis of luggage or of friendship with people who know only some language other than English, one gives up the vain virtuosity of handling a strange syntax with éclat and gets down to brass tacks.

Sometimes, even in a language that one has long known, some phrase seems to say more exactly what one means than anything in one's accustomed English. In the most practical and in the most delicate regions of awareness, however, one's own tongue remains primary. Even accomplished linguists report that they mostly count in their own language, and when some ejaculation or some sentiment quite personal and spontaneous springs to the lips, it will be in the locutions known since the nursery or the nursery school, not in that elegant expertness one flatters oneself to have achieved in the vocabulary of Dante or Racine.

"*Venice of the North*"

As the plane droned toward Stockholm, I assembled the images I had of Sweden a priori. Sweden the Middle Way, I thought, neither to the right nor to the left, the Aristotelian mean in modern dress. I thought of the slow-speaking Swedish-Americans I had known in the United States; I thought of the neutrality of Sweden in two world wars, and her wish to be neutral in case of a third. I thought of *smorgasbord* in Scandinavian-American restaurants and the delicacy of Swedish glass, and the pictures of the new clean lines of modern Swedish housing.

Then I remembered other things. The highest rates of suicide and of alcoholism in Europe, I had read somewhere, were in Sweden, and indeed alcoholism has been so violent in Sweden, and so disturbing, that now liquor was stringently rationed. I thought of the anguished tensions in Strindberg and the singular mixture of pride and humility in the great naturalist, Linnaeus. I thought of Hans Christian Andersen, but that, alas, was in Denmark, and of Charles the Twelfth, but knew very little about him, and of Gustavus Adolphus, and of the separation of Sweden and Norway in 1906 (wasn't it?) and of Jenny Lind, the Swedish nightingale, and of Ole Bull, the violinist, and—

"Fasten your seat belts," the lights flashed, and here we were descending into Stockholm. Oh, yes, the Venice of the North—and indeed, with all those little bodies of water, it looked like it from the air. Well, in five days, part of which was to be devoted to addressing, in English, a group of Swedes, I couldn't learn enough radically to alter my miscellaneous, mythological, precious picture.

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..... The Revolving Bookstand .....

A Life Work on a Grand Scale

THE CONFIDENT YEARS: 1885-1915. By Van Wyck Brooks. *New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 627 pp. $6.00.*

Reviewed by MAXWELL GEISMAR

This is the last volume and, I think, one of the best in Van Wyck Brooks's big series. It covers the background and opening phases of the modern period; it is, to some degree, Brooks's own period. He is himself one of those *Makers and Finders* which has become the general title of these five elaborate, intricate, solid and eloquent volumes of literary and cultural history. To this degree, too, he is less reverent in his own milieu, sharper and more informal, acute and very often entertaining, as in the studies of Edith Wharton and Gertrude Stein.

It is typical of the literary situation today that a work of this dimension—one of the few valid studies of our literature on the scale of the masters that has come out of all the paraphernalia and codas of the Age of Criticism—should be attacked and discredited by the so-called New Critics; and the final section of *The Confident Years,* on Pound, Eliot, and the religion of art, explains the fundamental difference between Brooks's values and theirs. Meanwhile, the book opens with the picture of New York literary life in the 1880's and 1890's, and moves to Philadelphia, Chicago, the San Francisco of Bierce, Jack London and Frank Norris. The South is here too, down to New Orleans, and treated with perhaps more sympathy and tolerance than it deserved in the period of Thomas Nelson Page, James Lane Allen, and the early Ellen Glasgow, who was already in revolt against "the ceremonial power of tradition."

The rise of the western realists is a central theme of the book, and Theodore Dreiser—another discredited figure in the eyes of contemporary criticism (I had almost said the Iron Schoolmarms of today)—emerges as the master of this group and perhaps the greatest of the modern novelists. This was the background of the literary renascence that flourished and declined, rather than began, in the 1920's, and Brooks sets up against it the London scene of Harold Frederics and Stephen Crane, the Paris of Leo and Gertrude Stein, and the European group that was the other pole of the movement. I can't begin to do justice to the scope of the book, however, or to the hundreds of minor figures (in this case, literally) whom Brooks has dug up here, as in the other volumes of the series, and placed in absolutely fresh perspective.

Surely, in their private lives, they were not always so persuasive and serene as they are in these pages—they are on their best behavior, so to speak, and only the best of their work has been used in this pageant of the writer in America from the world of Washington Irving to that of Hemingway and Faulkner. Brooks, like his Lafcadio Hearn in Japan, has also written an unparalleled record of a people "and a phase of its civilization that was passing away"—and to this extent, he views his literary figures as cultural emissaries, though on the highest mission of civilization, rather than as the tormented and distraught individuals they also were. Both major and minor figures in these five volumes stand for everything that is notable and durable in the last century of American letters; and perhaps this explains the special vigor of Brooks's attack on the Ezra Pound-T.S. Eliot school which is, at bottom, a reversionary movement—an ebb, or perhaps a whirlpool—in the main current of our letters.

This is a brilliant section of *The Confident Years,* and I am all for it. Brooks

MAXWELL GEISMAR is the author of *Writers in Crisis* and *The Last of the Provincials,* the first two volumes in a study of leading American novelists from 1840 to 1940. The third volume in the series, centered around the 1900's, will be published in the Spring of 1953.

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reminds us, as did William Carlos Williams' recent autobiography—and even Ezra Pound's letters—of the great difference between the critical atmosphere of the 1920's, which heralded a new literature, and that of today, which embalms it. Pound, even in his manias, remained very American —"the village cracker-barrel crank, on a planetary scale." But Eliot, in advocating royalism, a stratified society, "caste, censorship, inequality and what not," is no longer, as Brooks says, even typically English. It is time to accept their achievements as poets and dismiss their influence as thinkers. *The Confident Years*, very much like *America's Coming of Age* in 1915, clears the ground for new developments in our literature, even while it summarizes and brings to a climax a life work on a grand scale. As a series, *Makers and Finders* will remain one of the key works in describing what Brooks has called "the claims of America on the imagination"—and who, today—and I speak with admiration and envy—has stated these claims better?

A British Point of View

THE STRUGGLE FOR EUROPE. By Chester Wilmot. *New York: Harper & Brothers. 1952. 766 pp. $5.00.*

Reviewed by CRANE BRINTON

This account of the war in Europe is centered on the Allied campaign in Normandy and the ultimate sweep to the Elbe. Here Mr. Wilmot goes into planning and execution, often at the level of quite small units, in the tradition of detailed military history. Around his central narrative theme, however, he provides a setting of general analysis of world politics and world strategy. He is an Australian newspaper man and radio correspondent with direct experience of the campaign he writes about. He has had access to the unusually full materials, both on the Allied and on the Axis sides, which have already come into the public domain. He writes with professional competence a narrative that will hold the attention of many readers for whom military history ordinarily has little interest.

The book has had an extraordinary success in Great Britain, where it first appeared. Skilled though the narrative is, it is unlikely that so many readers really wanted to follow the 22nd Armored Brigade of the 7th Armored Division on Operation Perch to Point 213 and back to Bricquessard. What has held them is Mr. Wilmot's often-expressed belief that, both in military and in political policies, the British were right and the Americans wrong. This is a belief that will hardly prove as popular in America as in England. The book will certainly provide ammunition for revisionists and isolationists in this country; but these patriots will dislike it at heart quite as much as will the internationalists and liberals. Yet, if only as an indication of how the British feel about international politics, the book should be read—if possible, without moral indignation—by all Americans seriously concerned with our position in the world today. We must—if we are to use for peace, instead of for conquest, the leadership our wealth, power and fate have surprised us with—do the almost impossible job of seeing ourselves as others see us, and do it better than the peoples who have recently held European hegemony—the Germans, the French or the British themselves. This is a book to be read with patience and understanding, and not in the spirit of virtuous indignation.

On the military side, Mr. Wilmot credits the Americans with superb abilities on the production line, with a willingness—most of the time, at any rate—to experiment and improvise in the field with frontier-born dash and adventurousness, with the necessary military virtues of courage and endurance. But he finds us unwilling to learn from British experience (though we did learn from our own), addicted to the frontal assault and bulling our way through on sheer weight of *matériel*, not really capable of finessing the enemy, and obtuse in political warfare. Concretely, in the campaign in

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the West, he holds that Montgomery was right and the Americans generally wrong, especially in the great spread-out east and south by Patton's Third Army in the August and September of 1944, and that if British instead of American counsels had been followed, the war in the West would have ended with the destruction of the German armies in the Autumn of 1944. He holds even more firmly the view that the British were right and the Americans wrong about the use of Allied troops in the Mediterranean in 1944. The British wished to sweep on in Italy to the Po, and thence, from the head of the Adriatic, penetrate to the Danubian plains—a maneuver that had paid handsome dividends to Napoleon in 1797. The Americans—whose will prevailed—wished to contain the Germans in Italy along the Pisa-Rimini line and invest their striking power in Operation Anvil (the campaign from the Riviera up the Rhone valley) to help Operation Overlord (the landing in Normandy). But, according to Mr. Wilmot, Anvil came too late to help Overlord, was not necessary anyway, and actually did harm by tempting Eisenhower to push southeast to a Patton-Patch junction, instead of following Montgomery's plan for a straight push on a relatively narrow front through Belgium to the Ruhr. If the energy and resources that went into Anvil had gone into an operation aimed at middle Danubia, Mr. Wilmot implies, Vienna and Budapest would now be on the right, instead of the wrong, side of the East-West boundary.

This last, purely political, consideration brings us to the heart of Mr. Wilmot's book. Without crude or violent polemics, and indeed with a good deal of disarming fair-mindedness in concrete details, he leaves the reader with the impression that, if Mr. Churchill had had his way, if the British had been the predominant partner in the coalition, if their wisdom and experience had prevailed over our impatience and self-confidence—over the narrow pragmatism of our military leaders and the naive idealism of Roosevelt and Hull—the world would not now be in such a bad way. He does not apparently believe, with some European

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neutralists, that Russia could, by any possible Western policy, have been brought into genuine international cooperation—indeed, he blames Roosevelt for acting as though this *were* a possibility. He seems—though he is general rather than specific on these matters—to hold that Russia could have been stopped so far eastward of where she actually got, that she would not now be very powerful or dangerous.

Mr. Wilmot himself provides the clincher against his own argument when, in Chapter XXII, he quotes Hitler at one of his Führer conferences in August, 1944, as saying that the time would come when the tension between the Allies would become so strong that, like all coalitions, they would break up. Russia's defection, said Hitler, saved Frederick the Great in 1763, and Russia's defection would yet save him. No one, even with the wisdom of hindsight, can really know at just what point Russia would have made a separate peace, and certainly no one knew then. Sensible people, among whom most of us would include Mr. Churchill, knew that there was such a point, and preferred to play safe about it. Perhaps, indeed probably, Mr. Churchill really did fear and distrust Stalin always; but he took good care not to say or do, in public, anything—from 1941 to 1945—that would give Stalin reason for defection. Once the Western powers decided they had to use Stalin to beat Hitler, they set definite limits on their possible checking of Stalin. In 1944, there was no debate over whether Hitler had to be beaten.

Finally, Mr. Wilmot imputes blame for the present plight of the West in relation to the masses of Asia and Africa to American one-sided idealism about imperialism and spheres of influence. Here again he is far from clear or precise, especially as to an alternative policy. But in this whole matter, patience and a willingness to learn from experience—and even from our critics—is most necessary. We must try to see why Europeans and Englishmen find, in our practice in Latin America and our preaching in the rest of the world, much the same kind of hypocrisy that, in the nineteenth century, was attributed to *perfide Albion.*

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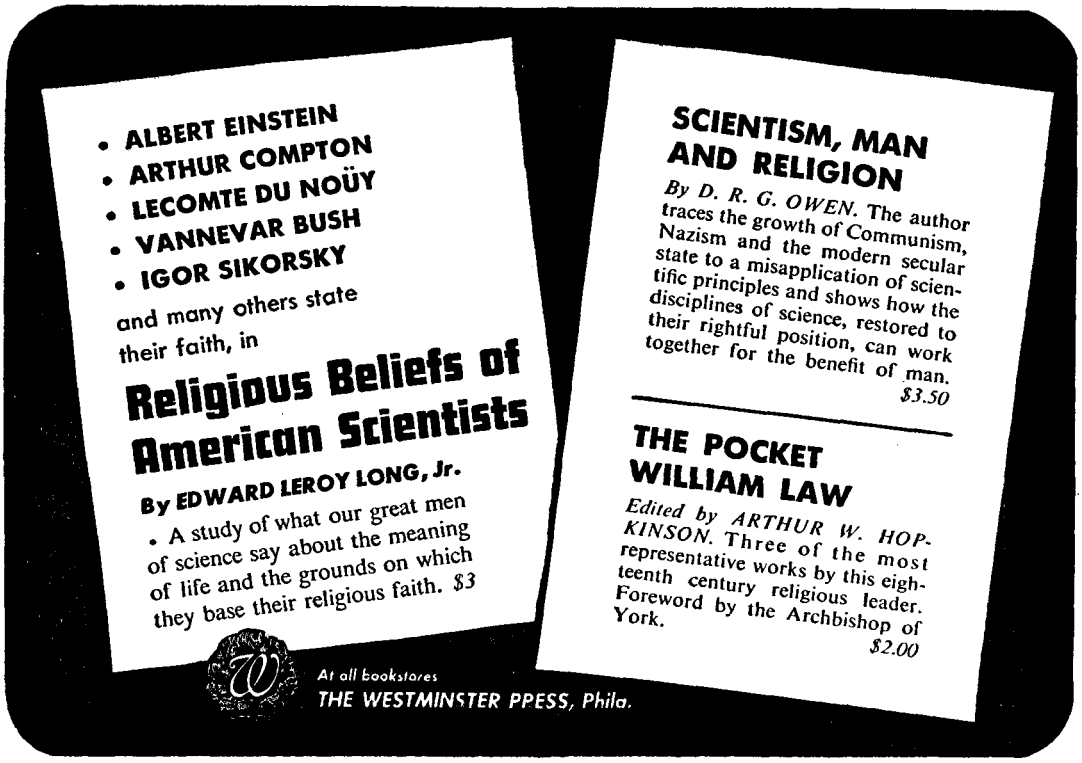

A Combination of Instinct and Experience

GRANDMA MOSES: My Life's History. Edited by Otto Kallir. *New York: Harper & Brothers. 1952. 140 pp. $3.50.*

Reviewed by MARY T. HAYDN

This book is Grandma Moses' story of her life—the life which put forth roots strong enough and certain enough to flower into painting at an age when most people are content with memories.

It is, first of all, a small compact book well illustrated. Perhaps this is a personal quirk—but I find such things as a photograph of "Grandma's painting table" irksome. Somehow, one conjures up pictures of numerous people setting up tables exactly like hers, and painting nothing. With this one exception, the illustrations are to the point and interesting: pictures of her parents, herself and her husband at various ages, photostats of her letters, and sixteen quite lovely color reproductions of her paintings.

Grandma's view of herself, her life, is as refreshing as her paintings. In quite simple and direct language (she writes, indeed, much as she paints), she provides a startlingly full account of what an almost century of living was like. She is a primitive in writing as in painting: perhaps "a primitive" is most characteristically one who knows, through a combination of instinct and experience, what the rest of us must be taught.

The adjectives applicable to Grandma's painting are equally applicable to this book: simple, honest, active, vital. Here is a woman who lived to her fullest capacity, and her charm lies in the fact that she has been so busy living that she never became self-conscious; she never stopped long enough to watch herself. One has the feeling of a person who rests for the job ahead—not of one who presents himself with a gift for the job just past.

✪ MARY TUTTLE HAYDN, a graduate of the Woman's College of the University of North Carolina, is a painter.

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It is safe to say that, if you like the paintings of Grandma Moses, you will like this book. If you don't like the paintings, you will probably find the book tedious or flat. For she looks at her life much as she looks at her canvas. Her memories are active ones: you learn what she did, where and how she did it, with whom, and even what she said. You do not learn what she thought, except as you surmise it from her actions. She was and is an almost complete extrovert. Actually, the sheer amount of physical work done in those days leaves one gasping; it must have left very little room for the more leisurely pursuit of introspection.

Grandma Moses says things she means—and means things she says. Her sense of humor is surprisingly undeveloped, but her sense of proportion makes up for this lack. The interplay of naivete and wisdom in the book is delightful, and the two elements appear in approximately equal proportions.

About children:

They didn't pay much attention to the kids. But they thought a lot of their kids anyway, I don't know but that they didn't think more of them then, than now. Mother didn't go to bed that she didn't go around to see that they were all sleeping and covered up, and Father watched over us too.

On life:

I have found in after years it is best never to complain of disappointments, they are to be.

I don't think I ever lost my temper and got real wild like some folks, even when I was young. When I get angry, I just keep quiet and think "Ishkabibble"—what the meaning of "Ishkabibble" is I don't know, but it's quite a by-word, something like "the devil take you." If you lose your temper, you do something and say something which you wouldn't if you waited a few minutes. (But a flash of temper is sometimes better than to brood over things and feel revengeful. That kind of preys on your mind when you get like that.)

It is hard in this age for one to realize how we grew up at all. I felt older when I was sixteen than I ever did since.

On art:

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of elderly people came, having heard my story.

Before I start painting, I get a frame, then I saw out my masonite board to fit the frame. (I always thought it a good idea to build the sty before getting the pig, likewise with young men, get the home before the wedding.)

Wisdom is, after all, a very simple thing, but the barriers in the way of it are not. It is good to read someone who has succeeded in passing these barriers. Grandma Moses always knew what she was doing. It is not surprising that when she got to painting, she knew what she was doing there, too. And it is fun to read how she got there.

Grandma's closing paragraph is good enough for me:

> I have written my life in small sketches, a little today, a little yesterday, as I thought of it, as I remembered all the things from childhood on through the years, good ones and unpleasant ones, that is how they come, and that is how we have to take them. I look back on our life like a good day's work, it was done and I feel satisfied with it. I was happy and contented, I knew nothing better and made the best out of what life offered. And life is what we make it, always has been, always will be.

She speaks of one Aunt Celina, who "was very determined in a lady-like way." So, indeed, was Grandma Moses.

The Need to Know Why

WHERE WINTER NEVER COMES. By Marston Bates. *New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1952. 310 pp. $3.50.*

Reviewed by PAUL B. SEARS

There is nothing quite like a fresh eye, provided that it belongs to an individual able to use it and to pass along his impressions in vivid fashion. Most of us, viewing the same scene for a lifetime and caught in the round of our own preoccupations, tend to become polarized, to see and report the same old things in the same old way.

✪ PAUL B. SEARS is chairman of the conservation program at Yale University. For several years, he has been studying ecological problems in Mexico. He is the author of numerous articles and books on ecology and conservation.

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Recently Marston Bates, back from a working career in tropical lands and thus having been free for a long time from the conventional pattern of our laboratories and lecture halls, gave us a most refreshing account of biological science in his *Nature of Natural History*. Now he reports on the tropics themselves, from the inside. There is, of course, a vast literature on special aspects of the tropics, but nowhere in English so compact, well-rounded an account as this.

Aside from its intrinsic importance as a source of information, *Where Winter Never Comes* is an exceedingly valuable example of the way an articulate scientist thinks. At a time when we are being urged to make up our minds and close issues, he exemplifies the tentative, painful process of continuing inquiry and search for truth. At every step he admits the limitations of his own knowledge, and the nature of his prejudices, so far as he is aware of them. Contrary to the thunderings of our moral and political leaders, it is only in this spirit of suspended judgment that the areas of uncertainty and conflict in human affairs can ever be minimized. The long way around is still the short way home.

The tropical lands and their future are, just now, of immense concern to mankind. In the background of all great issues today is the fact that world population is pressing hard upon the material resources which must support it. Only the willfully blind or idiotically optimistic ignore this fact. And among those who recognize it, there is much confusion. Some hold that the only solution is a radical program of reduced birth rates, others maintain that science can continue to tap new sources of sustenance to the limits of any conceivable need. As one of the greatest of these new sources, the tropics are important.

Marston Bates is too competent a biologist to think that humanity—or any other species—can go on breeding, unchecked. But his more immediate concern here is to examine the potential of the tropics to sustain mankind. To that end he reviews their development, their inhabitants and the ways of those inhabitants, the environments and

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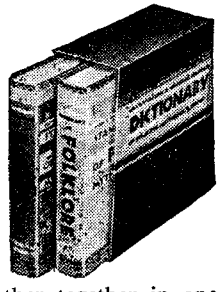

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resources of the tropics, their present political systems, and the modern world in which any solution must be worked out. One of his achievements is to steer a realistic course between two extremes—on one hand, the pessimism of those who hold the tropics unfit to sustain civilization, either because of their effect on the human organism or their ability to produce abundant food; and, on the other hand, the unbridled optimism of those who see it as a pushover for modern technology. That the tropics have been a victim of Western colonialism and exploitation for cheap raw materials and labor goes without question. What is their hope of integration into a wholesome world community?

Mr. Bates is soundly against any crude mass transplantation of practices from the "higher" civilizations, and has no pat suggestions. However, cheerfully admitting a predisposition such as the clergyman, politician or engineer might have to advocate reforms in their special fields of interest, he has some convincing things to say about science.

By science, he means, not technology, but an indigenous, authentic growth of fundamental and creative scientific work. Basically, I should agree with him, but from my own limited experience of the tropics, would go somewhat further. On the record, I believe it can be shown that truly liberal and humane education, incorporating science as an integral part, has served mankind during recent centuries out of all proportion to the resources expended upon it. It has fostered a spirit of public service, shaped the course of education at all levels, and made for that synthesis of human knowledge and human powers which is indispensable to the good life. What this enlightenment has done elsewhere, it can do in the broad realm between Capricorn and Cancer.

The greatest threat to the tropics comes, not from their own limitations or the present lack of technology and know-how, but from the need of its people to know why and to what ends. With that opinion, I am certain that the author of this admirable book would agree.

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as Mungo Park, Captain Hugh Clapperton, William Balfour Baikie and Mary H. Kingsley.

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"influence" have proved more sinister in the production of scandals than simple bribery.

EISENHOWER: The Man and the Symbol. By John Gunther. *Harper. $2.50.*

In a readable, vigorous and, on the whole, enthusiastic appraisal, John Gunther states the pros and cons of Eisenhower's character as indicated by his performance.

NEW HOPES FOR A CHANGING WORLD. By Bertrand Russell. *Simon & Schuster. $3.00.*

A reduction to basic principles of the conditions under which man may hope, not only to survive, but to achieve, eventually, happiness on earth. Accompanying the serenity of his faith in the good life—the life of reason—are enough flashes of the familiar satire to remove Mr. Russell's lucid exposition from the realm of easy panaceas.

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HORACE WALPOLE'S CORRESPONDENCE. Edited by W. S. Lewis and others. Vols. 15 and 16. *Yale University Press. $10.00 each.*

Mr. W. S. Lewis and his associate editors offer us in these volumes a partial view of Walpole the antiquarian. Letters to and from seventeen correspondents are here gathered together. None of the seventeen are among Walpole's intimate friends, but the common bond among them is their interest in the antiquities of Britain. Walpole proffers and receives counsel and corrections, and there is gratitude on both sides, save in the notorious case of Chatterton. The editorial work is of the high standard set when this noble edition was begun sixteen years ago.

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DUVEEN. By S. N. Behrman. *Random House. $3.50.*

A skillful dramatist, Mr. Behrman defines his protagonist—Joseph Duveen, the most spectacular art dealer of all time—in the first pages of the book, the tone and pace of which accord with its original appearance as a *New Yorker* profile. Much of the book's charm derives from the ironic contrast between the fantastic world of Duveen's millionaire clients and the detached perspective of Mr. Behrman's subtle commentary on that world.

THIS CROOKED WAY. By Elizabeth Spencer. *Dodd, Mead. $3.00.*

The story of Amos Dudley, mystic and hard-headed businessman from the Mississippi hills, who, in the early 1900's, acquired "a little bitty wife and a big plantation" in the Delta. The conflict in Amos' soul and the conflict between classes in the Deep South, epitomized in the marriage of a redneck to an aristocrat, are revealed by a gifted author in her second memorable novel.

THE CATHERINE WHEEL. By Jean Stafford. *Harcourt, Brace. $3.00.*

Because they are isolated, each by a different grief, disillusionment, and the wreckage of a long-cherished dream, Katharine Congreve and her young nephew, Andrew, learn to fear and distrust each other, and so to complete their individual isolations. *The Catherine Wheel* is a tender and moving study of a young boy's struggle to make peace with himself and win a place in his world; it is a less convincing study of an older woman's striving for these same goals.

JEFFERSON SELLECK. By Carl Jonas. *Little, Brown. $3.00.*

Selleck, 1894-1950, is a good man hopelessly provincial. He holds prejudices, yet we like the way he holds them. Only a remarkably knowing novelist can balance so truly the good in a man with the bad, and make us so fond of what we so condemn.

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GRAND RIGHT AND LEFT. By Louis Kronenberger. *Viking. $3.00.*

From the moment Isabel, third wife of collector-billionaire Gordon Cary, hesitantly recommends that her husband might collect people, until Gordon decides "If it had been any fun, they'd have been collected long ago," the whole project proves to be a mistake for everyone but Mr. Kronenberger and the reader who has forgotten the joy of a belly laugh.

SPARK OF LIFE. By Erich Maria Remarque. Translated by James Stern. *Appleton-Century-Crofts. $3.75.*

This is that rare story of concentration camp life in which a fine balance is established between the study of one man and the group he represents. Through Skeleton 509, Remarque submits that the will to live is even more important than living. The conclusion may be satisfactory only to those who agree with the author's basic premise.

THE SWIFT CLOUD. By Sigrid de Lima. *Scribner's. $3.00.*

In writing of the guilt of Clyde Cassen, charged with the murder of his idiot son, Miss de Lima intricately traces and describes the personalities and intimacies of the little town of Caldwell. This is a powerful appraisal of man's inhumanity to other men and to himself.

CLARA. By Lonnie Coleman. *Dutton. $3.00.*

An unusually fine and highly readable novel, Lonnie Coleman's *Clara* is the story of two women, one Negro and one white, and the interplay of their lives over a generation. Apart from the sheer narrative skill, the particular excellence of the book lies in the ability with which the author traces the steady development of character.

THE GROVES OF ACADEME. By Mary McCarthy. *Harcourt, Brace. $3.50.*

The "liberal," "progressive" college, with its inhabitants, is the focus of satire in Miss McCarthy's new novel. Although she sees very clearly into current academic pitfalls, and despite the incisiveness of individual strokes, the book lacks the sustained tone and careful structure which might make it a compelling lesson for our time.

THE PAPERS OF THOMAS JEFFERSON. Vol. V: February 25, 1781—May 20, 1781. Julian P. Boyd, Editor. Lyman H. Butterfield and Mina R. Bryan, Associate Editors. *Princeton. $10.00.*

This volume, like its immediate predecessor, covers the period of Jefferson's wartime governorship of Virginia. It contains 321 letters written by Jefferson and 448 received by him during this period. Among the persons with whom he corresponded were military men like Washington, Steuben, Lafayette and Muhlenberg; and civilians, particularly government officials. This incredibly detailed collection, with its superb notes, forms a treasury of materials on war and politics in a crucial period of the American Revolution. The editing continues to be of the very highest order of scholarship.

(Continued from page 363)

doubt he would also permit him to avoid the use of *infer* in the sense of *imply*, the confusion of *affect* with *effect*, and the pronunciation and spelling of *medéval*. He would have an indulgent attitude toward Mr. Barzun if the latter eschewed those interesting forms of expression, *might of done* and *hadn't otter*. He might even permit him the fussiness of saying "not very" instead of "not too"—"The apple pie was not too good" (as if any pie could be too good for human nature's daily food).

I shall not be able, I am sure, to modify Mr. Hultzén's way of thinking or dampen the enthusiastic scholarship of Mr. Lloyd; but at this point I stand, that I will not in any circumstances rephrase the opening of this sentence in the ludicrously self-contradictory words, "I will not be able . . ."

Finally, I hope Mr. Hultzén appreciates my title! Can he tell from it whether I am uninterested or disinterested?

WILLIAM T. HASTINGS
Brown University
Providence, Rhode Island

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The Barzun-Lloyd Exchange

In regard to Donald J. Lloyd's stimulating "Snobs, Slobs and the English Language" and Jacques Barzun's delightfully witty "Retort Circumstantial":

Though D. J. Lloyd is right, of course, in his contention that language is a living and therefore a changing organism, my sympathies are, on the whole, very much with Barzun. Our mass education, which has produced general literacy but little taste, makes it more than ever necessary for an elite which is dedicated to the pursuit of perfection to hold high its standard. The danger to our language is certainly not from the uneducated, who enrich it with their colorful colloquialisms, but from the *half*-educated masses, who may consider themselves wholly educated, yet who tend (as mass does) to take the easier, "good enough" way in speech as in other things, such as honor.

Mr. Lloyd asks, "Who is not negligent in language, as in the mechanics of driving a car?"

I answer, "The aristocrat of language is not negligent of it, as the aristocrat of mechanics is not negligent of his car's engine." They both strive to keep equipment in really good shape for, and in spite of, the careless rest of us. And they both welcome new, functional additions to their vehicle, while being wary of expensive trimmings or inferior, even if cheaper, materials.

Dorothy Lee Richardson
Brent School
Baguio, Philippines

Here and There

May I comment on three matters?

Peter Viereck's "Like a Sitting Breeze" and his explanation of it hardly constitute a sturdy enough peg on which to hang argument about modern poetry. We have recovered from that stage when it was fashionable to project unwholesome, unformed states of mind through ambiguous, esoteric language in a weak and blurred manner.

Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Barzun aimed their recent articles, each against the author of the other. But, insofar as the articles are concerned with the generalities of the use of language, and not with opinions attributed by the one author to the other, they are not contradictory. Mr. Lloyd said that words mean what their users mean, who continually fashion their sense, as occasion arises, for practical purposes. Mr. Barzun said that the normative process is a fact, necessary. Both are right.

You have given much space to the new Babbitry and independent thought. Could one urge you and your writers to be somewhat less on the defensive? For Mr. Jones and Mr. Van Doren, in your Autumn number, are very much on the defensive. Each, amongst other things, excuses himself and goes through the spoken ritual that he is not a Communist. Have you not, amongst your writers, one who could satirize our present attempt to achieve security within our country by mutual suspicion?

Alfred Ogle
Greenfield Hill Road
Fairfield, Conn.

Freud, Religion and Science

It is interesting to note, as Mr. Riesman does not, in "Freud, Religion and Science" (Summer, 1951), that the psychoanalysts stressed are Freud (=joy), Jung (=young) and Fromm (=pious).

Robert Withington
Northampton, Massachusetts

A Comment on Comments

The controversy over the Right, the Left and the "Vital Center" in contemporary poetry has already raged through three issues of The American Scholar, so it is with some trepidation that I proffer another word on the subject. This letter, however, like Mr. Viereck's in the Winter number, is less a commentary on the poem than on some of the comments of readers who disliked "Like a Sitting Breeze."

Two of your correspondents, Mr. Rice and Mr. Klossner, point out with triumphant glee that Viereck's prose explication of his poem is considerably longer than the

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poem itself. The observation reminds me of what I still recall as the most memorable sentence that I jotted down after my one conversation with Robert Frost. "Poetry," Frost said, "has got to be as good as the equivalent prose."

Of the many ironies I have found in Frost's poetry, lectures and essays, this is the most penetrating. There is no prose equivalent for a poem—any more than there is a prose equivalent for a symphony or a painting.

The problem involves the quality of *compression*, one of the values that unmistakably characterize poetry, and first of the two most important ingredients in what Mr. Viereck calls "magic." The second is like unto it; namely, the evocative power of figurative language. And this brings me to Mr. Rice's parody, "Like a Flying Tree," of which he says, modestly, "If Viereck's three stanzas are poetry, so are mine. If there is beauty, charm and loveliness in his lines, they should be found in mine."

I admit freely that "Like a Sitting Breeze" is not, by many, many miles, Mr. Viereck's happiest effort. Without the help of his exegesis it is still too personal and hence too impenetrably obscure for publication. But for all that, there is magic in it; and anyone who doubts that is free to find, if he can, in the whole of Mr. Rice's strained, wooden parody, anything comparable to the music, the compression, the imaginative splendor, the sheer lyric loveliness of Viereck's last stanza.

Like most of our younger poets, Mr. Viereck began to write under the strong influence of the Pound-Eliot-Tate school of poet-critics. He has since largely, though not entirely, got from under that incubus. In his letters, as elsewhere, he abjures Pound and Tate by name. In my opinion, he is still too much misled by the weaker, "esoteric" side of Eliot's "Wasteland" period.

In spite of that, however, after a rather careful reading of most of Viereck's published poetry and prose, I am convinced that in him American literature is witnessing the evolution of a first-rate mind, and probably of a genuinely great poet. Barring accidents, Mr. Viereck should do much toward restoring poetry—on its own immemorial terms—to its rightful place in the vanguard of the battle for a humanly livable world.

IRA N. HAYWARD
Utah State Agricultural College
Logan, Utah

The Nature Of An Oath

I find myself in disagreement with Howard Mumford Jones's article, "Do You Know the Nature of an Oath?"

There is sound precedent that all subjects of the United States, as well as of each of the states, may be required to take a loyalty oath or oath of allegiance which may properly contain a clause that abjures the common enemy. Thus the oath may be required of ministers and parents, as well as of teachers. There is authority for this:

1. In the year 1776, a loyalty oath could be required of any subject under certain circumstances. See *History of Bergen and Passaic Counties, New Jersey*, compiled by W. Woodford Clayton, assisted by William Nelson, in 1882. This was true in the state of New Jersey.

2. By resolution of the Continental Congress, dated February 3, 1778, a loyalty oath was prescribed for officers of the United States, both military and civil. See also the printed form of oath, used pursuant to the terms of this resolution. It abjures the common enemy.

3. Blackstone's *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, Chapter X: "Of the People, whether Aliens, Denizens, or Natives." He points out that in a civilized, orderly state there must exist the allegiance of each subject to it.

Personal liberty is not invaded by the requirement to take a properly worded oath of allegiance. The elements of a proper form may be found in the written oath of allegiance of an alien when he or she becomes a citizen of the United States.

Those who advise against the taking of a loyalty oath may some day, under certain circumstances, be deemed traitors.

WILLARD L. DE YOE
Hewitt, New Jersey

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